



RFD

for country faggots everywhere

Spring

1975

50¢

RFD is

So another RFD is going to press and we sit here wondering how it all happened. There is only a little more cutting and gluing to do, then the red-eyed job of proofreading. The attic will be quiet again. No more typewriters, coffee, scissors, pen and ink, RFD country map on the wall, articles and letters to decide on. And the seven or eight odd faggots that put the magazine together this time want to tell you all how we did it.

The response from far-apart places in the country (Australia to Maine) has been overwhelming. Each day we get a new batch of mail. With the letters have come graphics, poetry, articles, photographs, all celebrating our new found connection with each other. The large volume of material made it necessary for us to choose what would be good for this issue, and what would have to either wait for a future printing or collect dust in a brown file box until the sky falls in. So it became necessary to judge the material on the basis of our own political and personal beliefs, and what would work together to form a spring message.

Each issue is put out by a different group of people, and each issue reflects their own beliefs. For us, these included decisions not to use materials we felt to be of only titillating intent. Nor did we use things we felt were oppressive. We voice support of feminine identified males. Subscriptions to any persons institutionalized against their will receive the magazine free. Perhaps the most important realization we came to was that RFD is and should be for faggots. For us this means that all material used is created by faggots. All production, layout and financial support is provided by faggots.

So far, RFD is the only connection that gay men who are into alternatives to city slicking have with each other. We need to become responsive to ourselves. We need a safe communication between others like ourselves in this continual process of coming out and growth.

Feedback on all this would be appreciated from all you who are Really Feeling Divine. Many thanks to all who contributed time, energy, money and love for this issue.

Now we are turning our energies to other things... vegetable starts for the garden, cleaning out the house, thunderstorm anticipations, personal and collective growth. Much bursting and blooming is to be done after a long, long Iowa winter. Time to be outdoors in the country again, time for budding.

It's been a good change for us all, this RFD #3. Hope you enjoy it. And hope your spring is fruitful and really, really divine.

of country men

the
country
men

and
faggots

REALLY FEELING DIVINE



RFD SPRING EQUINOX 1975 RFD

PRODUCTION

Dick, Don-Tevel, Ken, Kim, Larry,
Olaf, Ollie, Rick and Stewart

GRAPHICS

Allan: 33, 39, pansies, seed packet
Allan Berube: 39
Wilton David: 3
Dick: 1,2,7,27,36
Don-Tevel: 8,10,20-23, 40, 42-44
Patrick Dowers: 19, 48
Arthur Evans: 15
Kim: 18, 30, 31, back cover
Olaf Odegaard: 13
Ollie: cover, 47
Richard: little flowers
Rick: 26
Robert Schelhammer: 24-25
Jay Schraeter: 16
Stewart: 45

RFD is published four times a year by
RFD, P.O. Box 161, Grinnell, Iowa
50112 and is printed by the Iowa City
Women's Press, 116½ East Benton St.,
Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

A year's subscription is \$2.00 (second
class mail). Single copies are 50¢.
Second Class postage is paid at Grinnell,
Iowa 50112.

CONTENTS

2 Letters	country faggots everywhere
4 Winter in the High Country	Barrie Wyoming
5 Northwest North Carolina	David Dalton North Carolina
6 Oh, Friend	Joe California
Crocus	Ollie Iowa
7 City/Country	Lee Mintz New York
12 Leather	Jason Quicksilver Washington
13 When the Crash Comes, What Will Faggots Do?	John Upson Pennsylvania
14 Two Tales of New Sodom	Jay Schraeter Washington
18 Forest Shelter	Arthur Evans Washington
19 Color Page	Kim Wisconsin
20 Whistlers on the Wind	Patrick Dowers Washington
23 A Chinese Zen	Ollie Iowa
24 Poetry	Caradoc ap Cador California
	Russell Ross British Columbia
	robert california
26 Country Roads	country faggots everywhere
27 Earth Photos	Dick Iowa
28 More Letters	country faggots everywhere
29 untitled	Olaf Wisconsin
30 At the Pass--a modern morality play	Carl Oregon
34 Uncle Ned Says, "Let's Eat!"	country faggots everywhere
36 More Letters	country faggots everywhere
39 In Vernalis Temporis	Allan Oregon
40 The Magick of the Moon	Felix New York
41 the leather look...	gavin north carolina
42 Spring, Spirit, and Faggoty	Don-Tevel Iowa
45 An Equinox Letter	Stewart Iowa
46 Resources	
48 In the summer days...	Olaf Wisconsin

LETTERS & LETTERS & LETTERS & LETTERS

I just received and read and re-read, looked at and felt the winter issue and I'm filled. Really beautiful channels are opening up. I feel that RFD has the power to disperse a lot of aloneness, the kind of aloneness that makes people think they are singular in their struggles. Sure we are in a certain sense, but I feel the channels for relating ease the isolation. So grateful.

It's raining here. A soft rain. I can zip up my coat, raise my head to the sky smell feel the wind wet blow through my hair my head down over my eyes my nose my lips. So grateful for the contact the connection.

Robert Schelhammer
San Francisco



Truthfully, I am very disappointed with RFD. At no point has it been helpful to the large group of gays that I know, see or treat.

Being aware of the fact that this is not the most diplomatic way to open a letter or to initiate an idea, I must explain.

As we see it this publication is of much less value to the gays than those publications from the big city, such as the Advocate. And at this point I am referring to those persons who live in rural areas.

You ask, "What's wrong?"...Well, pseudosophistication is obvious. Linguistic and journalistic skills are not those of rural America. Next there has yet to be an article truly relevant to those outside the metro areas. Nothing is presented to assist the rural gay in his plight...far better he read Newsweek or Time. The format and pictures appear to have come from a New York City psychedelic shop...one whose owner was on a drug trip. Syntax, I wonder?

What I am saying is you have an excellent idea in RFD...but would someone "get their shit together" and put out a publication for the people of rural America? Would someone write of the difficult, as well as the less difficult, manner in which the rural same sex-oriented individual finds himself. And when possible offer suggestions of how he copes with those problems.

As a physician teaching human sexuality at Central Michigan University, one who counsels gays, one treating transexualism and a professional who cares about the

quality of life of each individual I offer the above remarks.

Obviously it is my intention to be helpful. Only by telling you what others think can you make reasoned approaches to your publication. I wish you well and hope that you can be of real value to those readers in the rural areas.

Respectfully,
Loren G. Burt, M.D.



...I had made the 2000 mile move from Texas to live in the countryside of Oregon's Willamette River Valley, and there I was at the river's end in Portland-town, its grey dampness accented by the cloudy night and its big-city loneliness sharpened by inaccessible heights of the skyscrapers that are its heart. So there I was, contemplating how dependent gays are on the city bar games (sexual and social) to meet other gays. And wondering where my priorities were, anyway. And how could I meet someone interested in rural lifestyle in downtown Portland. Possible, but highly improbable. So I returned to my house on the hill, and a rural friend who is gay put your magazine in front of me.

After reading it cover-to-cover I became somewhat relieved and even a little hopeful that my country home was not a self-imposed exile from my gay people. I now am looking forward to a time of meeting these other men who share common interests and philosophies, as well as sexuality. Thanks to RFD. You folks had a great idea. I'm glad you motivated, not only for my sake, but for those who are yet to discover others into the sensitivities of nature and the Earth. I'm no longer flying through Mother Earth News wondering where everybody is....

Jay Jackson
Rt. 1, Box 79
Monmouth, OR 97361



Your magazine is great, inspiring, and just enough to keep me on the right track--living close to the ground gets a little muddy sometimes.

Tim, Georgia
c/o RFD

I have just returned from New York where I thought I wanted to live, after a surfeit of Plainfield. Perhaps it took the opposite extreme to give me a new appreciation for rural living. The house I have moved into sits immediately beside the Winooski. There is a waterfall behind, so that the back of the building always has liquid music and the front windows face up the river and towards the mountains.

I have been writing a novel for two years, which is a lonely occupation, and since novels don't sing or dance or do anything of their own, it is a dry art to work at. "Those who live by the word will die listening."--Delmore Schwartz, a quote I have just found, which I am listening to, which expresses my general intention not to die at a typewriter.

I used to feel isolated here, used to miss the availability of things like the baths and bars and entertainment spots of cities, but I no longer miss any of this. I do not care about the availability of anything so much as love, companionship and growth, which can be found anywhere or nowhere. Country living only removes the dross to show me the innards; and if love does not exist, or is denied, it is usually not for want of partners.

Stephen, Vermont
c/o RFD



Our names are Mark and Andy. We live in Fayetteville, a small college town in northwest Arkansas... Although Fayetteville isn't a true rural community, many people have come here in recent years for the purpose of getting back to the land. The majority of these new pioneers are young family-oriented people, into a Steve Gaskin's "The Farm" trip. However, there is also a sizeable gay population in Fayetteville.

Mark and I have been here for about six months, originally to homestead a small acreage in these beautiful Ozark Mountains. However, we find ourselves temporarily settled in the town itself, waiting for the right opportunity to venture forth into the hills. We are interested in hearing how other gays are managing in rural Amerika, and the problems, successes and lessons others have had. Look forward to hearing from you.

Mark and Andy
c/o RFD



Here in Humboldt County, lots of Gay men are coming together in a group called Gay People's Union. (We find that most of the women prefer to be a part of the Sisters of Sappho, the group from which we sprang.) We've been involved in some political actions, like a protest of a Marcus Welby segment. We and the Sisters have alerted members of the local press to the existence of Gay people, and to the fact that we are real human beings. The newspaper has run its first articles on Gays, and we have gotten air time on two of the three television stations. We're trying to educate the straight population, and more importantly, to reach our sisters and brothers who are afraid of their own Gayness.

At the same time, we give Gays a chance to get together in pleasant company. This helps break down the isolation that drives so many Gays out of our area to places like San Francisco and Los Angeles. I believe that it is especially important to give young Gays in high school good examples of proud Gay people--so they can build a positive self-image.

I have great hopes for RFD. I feel I have much to learn about how others approach being a country faggot, and I feel I may have something of my own to share.

I'd also like to correspond with my Gay country brothers, so please write. I can tell you about redwoods like Marin never thought of having. With love,

Richard Khamsi
P.O. Box 94
Loleta, CA 95551



WINTER IN THE HIGH COUNTRY



The alarm goes off at 6 a.m., and the first thing I do is look out the window. I can see the stars and the wind isn't blowing so it has got to be cold.

Looking at the thermometer, I see it is -10 degrees. That isn't bad as here in the high country, at 7000 ft. above sea level, it is a dry cold. Of course, it could be unbearable, but most times, when the wind blows it is a cool wind, and the temperature may be in the +20's. I love to see an overcast sky and wind, as long as I am dressed for it. I throw water on my face, brush my teeth, get dressed, make breakfast, fix my lunch, and listen to the news from New York.

Damnit, the news makes a guy want to get drunk and say the hell with it all.

The lumber mill starts at 7 a.m., half an hour for lunch, and time to go home at 3:30. I make \$3.80 per hour, not much for the East or West Coast but O.K. for Wyoming.

I head for the post office, then the drug store sometimes, and then home after a hard day at the mill. There is not much to do in a small town, during the winter.

At 5 p.m. it is dark, I cook supper, take a bath, watch tv, and play my tapes. Sleep comes and then it is morning.

On the weekends, I am in the mountains, or with some friends (married) on ranches that they rent or own.

Winter is a slow, uncomfortable time during the week. Summers are just great, but I sure can get cabin fever in the winter.

I'll be making a trip to Denver sometime soon on a long weekend. Fifteen gay bars, more or less, man what a good time. Hit a bar, in bed, another bar, in bed, etc., getting drunk, etc. Then time to go home and a whole day to travel. Denver is a trip about four times a year.

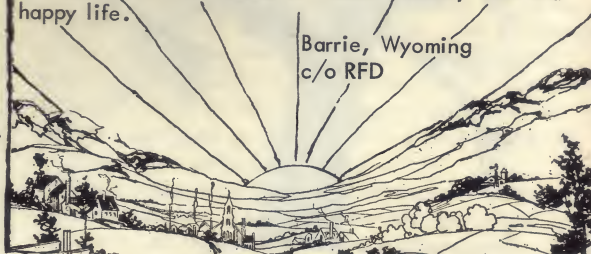
I love the mountains though. They grow on you. I have deer and moose, fishing and mountains in my back yard. I have a truck to get around with. If I never turned on TV, I'd never know what was going on.

I am 35, but look 25, good, straight-looking. I guess I need a best buddy-lover to share everything with. I am no different than most rural gays, happy, sad, and halfway, but getting along.

On the news there is a storm coming east from Oregon and Washington, so there will be snow and it will be beautiful.

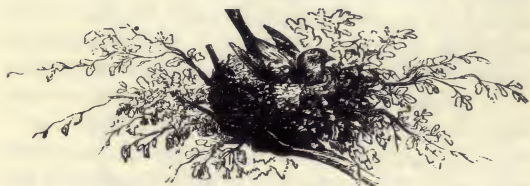
The weekend is coming up and I love them. Perhaps on Saturday night I'll go to one of the few bars in town. I'll talk about hunting, fishing, women, etc., and drink with the best of them and be the straightest-acting queer in the U.S. I'll think about Denver, the mountains, and home, and get drunk.

I just wanted to share my thoughts with other rural gays. So this is life in the winter in the high country--the same as in low Kansas or Texas. Peace, love and happy life.



MORE LETTERS

I would like to correspond with and meet other RFD readers from the Midwest. If you are visiting Minneapolis or live in this area, drop me a line so we can get together. I am a former farmer displaced to the city. Please write: Occupant, 2435 Pillsbury Avenue S., #309, Minneapolis, MN 55404.



My first issue of RFD arrived earlier this month and I really felt good after I got into it. This town (population 3,005) is quite a change from growing up in Los Angeles and coming out in Berkeley. Many of the thoughts that I had not expressed--or shared only with gay friends on rare visits to the Bay Area--were clarified and made obvious to me through reading what others were doing in the country.

May I make a little plug for my livelihood--the county library? Most libraries are moving away from the "keeper of the books" image and the picture of the old lady with her hair in a bun "sh-ing" everyone. We have all kinds of information on almost any topic; and if we don't, we can borrow it from other places. Please give your local county library a try when you have a question or just need something to read for a little relaxation.

With much love,
Steve, California
c/o RFD

NORTHWEST NORTH CAROLINA,

NOVEMBER ~~~~~ 1974

Gavin will be off to San Francisco any day now. He says he's going crazy here and knows he couldn't live here with Cathy gone. Cathy's going back to Boston--this time for good I guess. I've never lived in Boston or San Francisco. Perhaps if I had, I too would come to need that flux of beautiful people. But I'll be cooking meals for one again, lighting fires for one, coming home to a dark house, waiting daily for the mail.

The house is huge, old, cold, and drafty. Gavin hung some old black curtains around the staircase to keep heat from getting lost upstairs. Many days in October we sawed the dead wood in the old goat thicket. It makes perfect cooking wood. Wood will be the only heat this year. I sold the oil heater. Oil is too expensive now. I've three wood stoves and two fireplaces. More than enough. I do worry about the houseplants, though. Some of them were frostbitten last winter in the dining room window. And I worry about the 'Driel--she's such a cold natured cat. But I'll try to leave her good fires when I'm gone to work, and she sleeps with me at night. We keep each other warm, and she doesn't seem to mind if I roll on her. Gavin hates to be cold. He says people weren't meant to live outside the tropics, or wear clothes or eat anything

but fresh-picked fruit. Says why do I cook so much rice and soybeans--too much protein--and why don't the grocery stores here have decent fruit--the grocery stores in California always have fruit. Says why do I even live in this state, why don't I quit my job, and sell my goats, and get rid of my piano and go somewhere nice. I don't know. Inertia maybe. It's kind of nice sometimes. I can get by plenty well with only two friends, and my dog, my car, my mail box and my piano. But gosh, it's going to be a long cold winter with just my dog, my car, my mailbox and my piano.

September was so nice. My dog and I met Gavin's plane at the airport. I hadn't seen Gavin for seven months. I watched the plane roll toward the gate, and I thought of the song that had gone through my head over and over the last time I told Gavin goodbye: "Daniel is leaving...." The same feeling in reverse...my reward...my compensation. He walked into the lobby, hair flying, West Coast clothes, painted fingernails. He was beautiful. We spent the next four weekends in the mountains looking for a farm to buy that we never found. The Blue Ridge Mountains. My roots are there, the ghosts of

my ancestors. My great-grandmother who mastered the dulcimer, my great-grandfather who threw himself in front of a train, my great-uncle who tamed the trout in his little pond and planted the white pines that Gavin likes so much and the ginseng we could never find.

October was nice. Cathy came home from Massachusetts. We made dinners for each other, played the piano for each other. Gavin and I moved the goat fence and baked pumpkin pies: the 84 year old widow across the road gave us a pumpkin for moving her snowball bush and planting her jonquils and told us what good neighbors we are. And the 'Driel had the prettiest kittens she's ever had. Gavin chose one that looks like the cat



he had in California, and he says I must save it for him.

Fantasies always help during a lonely streak, and my fantasy for December is this: In February I shall close up the house, send the plants to my sister, the goats to board with Cammi and some of the cats to friends in Virginia. I shall borrow a little gypsy trailer, attach it to the car, and the dog, the 'Driel and I shall strike out for California. Perhaps my friend who lives like an Indian in Colorado will let me visit a day or two. I shall pass through Denver, and Las Vegas, L.A. and 'Frisco, Portland and Seattle--maybe even Vancouver, and Toronto and Chicago, Boston and New York. Then I shall come home again, and open up the house, and put the goats in the pasture, and that will be the end of winter. Gavin will come back with me. He'll be through with San Francisco by then.

David Dalton

(David's house was pictured on page 3 of the Winter Issue of RFD. On December 22, he wrote that the house burned down. "Anyway, I saved my dog and cats but lost everything else, and I have moved (gulp) to the city."

Oh Friend

Oh friend, look behind your shadows, there you are clothed with sun as if shadows were a box that could be opened and all these regarded--returned of--disposed of.

There is a thing I would understand, perhaps you could help me. I don't see intensity or exposure as the salutation/grace of sexual emotion. In relationship, there is growth, fulfillment within each other where there is love. We make of our bodily joys instruments destructive, our use of each other is negligent of tenderness when we seek the destruction of the want/self thru the oblivion of union with another. Before we have opened in joy, perhaps the deepest communication is sexual, at once the most complete, physically emotionally that is known--yet in joy, we can share ourself with the morning as if a spirit folded us in diaphanous wings. This morning I walked down a hillside of moist earth and my joy was clear, real stream water wonderous on glass clarity moving and I wondered about tenderness and how these blue eyes of mine turn warm or soft, or joyful or weaken with so great a feeling and I wondered about feeling and expression and sexuality then. Who here can bring me to understand this thing I have never stood in a clear place to see through?

Joe



Crocus

Ha! It's come to me at last:
ever since I can remember seeing a flower bloom
not knowing what it took to break through
left-over winter crust of unwormy soil,
staring out brilliantly washed windows
onto a dullness and pallor
that could only have taken centuries to decay;
then going through the torture of guilt:
needle pangs in a heart too fresh to bleed,
that could only swell in an already too tiny chest;
then could I feel the lies of what they were telling me.
The message being that I was inadequate alone,
worse, that we were lost together;
that to be complete I had to have another-
not the same, but complementary;
lies in which every innocence is made a guilt,
stories of make-believe castles and the unfairied princess;
all to get me working in line
but they never told me what to do
when my world caved in.
So amidst piles of rubble and crap,
I composed of decay my own fairy tale.
But this one with a twinkle and a gleam
that comes from a soul-
a spirit that knows once we come together
to lose ourselves that we become
as the plant breaking through crusted soil,
a crocus in the spring come to tell us anew
that we have another try
at putting together the pieces
of this clear blue nothingness
which in its all becomes the contentment
the crocus needs
to come up again
this spring.

Ollie



CITY

Lee Mintz

So I'm living in San Francisco, my fifth winter in that ever changing cycle of the city to country, of the land to concrete syndrome.

Growing up in the urban Midwest, I had never really experienced the country before. It was never my parents' inclination to show us what rural life was like. The closest I got to it was summer camp when I was nine and ten. Oh, there was the country all around, but I was so entrenched in group activity, group competition, group rituals and group discipline that I hardly noticed much else. So I grew up in suburbia ignorant of the world of streams, woods, and meadows.

When I went away to school, I did get an inkling of my love of trees and flowers from exploring parks and fields while tripping on psychedelics. LSD opened up a whole new world of the mysteries and beauty of nature. Trees, especially, brought me comfort and helped me explore myself in my solitude. But the parks were limiting, and I was aware of the urbanism surrounding them.

I'll never forget the first time I experienced the country.

I had been living in New York City for about a year. Then the city was teeming with excitement and freshness. I was really getting off on the vibrations and multistimuli of all the activity and decadence of the largest city I'd ever seen. At the same time, however, summer was approaching, and I was quite open to alternatives to escape the outrageous heat that engulfs the city. So, when my brother invited me up to a house a man he had met and others were renting in the Catskills, I was overjoyed.

COUNTRY

Three hours later I was in the mountains. A whole new world opened up to me. There was a large house surrounded by meadows, woods, streams, a lake, daisies, goldenrods, ferns, and mountains! Milling in and out of the house were about twenty freaks (it was, after all, 1970), gay and straight, clothed and naked, all playing and getting high under the open sky. I was overwhelmed! That summer I fell in love with the magic of nature and spent most of it getting to know a new part of myself that so connected with it. But, alas, fall approached, and it was time to go back to the city. Many of us were students and teachers, and the school year of September-June dictated the structure of one's life.

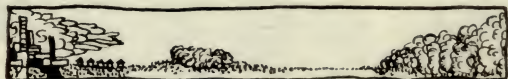
I was involved with a man at the time and had the desire to live with him in the city—a lover trip I had never experienced before. So the weekends were relegated to country living which often became a hassle due to time and distance.

During the fall the bliss of our fantasy country world was invaded by the pigs in a mammoth drug bust of the three hippie communes in town. Although we were pretty good about remaining high throughout the ordeal, a new wave of paranoia and disillusionment seeped in. Fifty arrests and \$2000 later, we found a new home for weekend retreats in another town in the lower Catskills.

As winter approached, however, my commitment to my city life and lover grew. I was working in an office and living in an apartment in the Village. I thought of the country, but my priorities at the time were clear both financially and emotionally. New York City still had a charm and excitement to explore as well as the dynamics of living in a quaint apartment with a lover.

As summer approached again, though, I found myself

wanting to experience the open country. The city glow was getting stale and tripping on the streets of New York or the fields of Central Park was not enough. But because of financial and other technicalities, I could only spend limited amounts of time upstate. That summer was spent back and forth between the two realities. The times upstate, however, were glorious and revitalizing, and my connection with it was reinforced. At this point, it still seemed like a vacation from the city, my "real" life.



My feelings for communal living were also growing as I was getting closer to the people with whom I was spending my country excursions. We all felt it was time to live together on a full-time basis. And with fall, again came the city/school/work commitments, so we decided to rent a large house on Staten Island. There were fourteen of us, still gay and straight. Our country home became more of a hassle to keep. Short weekend trips seemed less desirable, and we gave up our country oasis.

At the same time, our city needs were getting stimulated. I was becoming more and more politically aware and active. I felt the city was the place to be for social change and revolution. There were many gay talks/plans/groups. It was time to educate the heterosexual masses and demonstrate against our oppression. Guilt trips and such went down about the country as escape from our struggles to say nothing of classist privilege. As our Gay consciousness grew, so did our alienation from our straight communards. Much came out that winter about support and the split in our house came to a head. It was a winter for tremendous growth and strength as well as shattered illusions about living together. Our gay separatism and dream for a gay community grew.



And again, as Spring approached, we all became very anxious about a summer city escape. The straight people moved out, and for the first time we were a gay commune, our loves and ties to each other stronger than ever. But we had no country home, and our political guilt succumbed to our personal needs as we frantically searched for a summer oasis. We all felt ready to make a deeper commitment to each other and the thought of renting a house again seemed wasteful. Financially, as a group, we could be open to buying. We had one important criterion—to be near enough to some sort of gay community or activity. The only places like that near rural settings are college towns.

We came across the opportunity to buy a sixteen acre strip on the side of a hill a couple of hundred miles from New York and twenty minutes from Ithaca, a college town. I had a house in mind as camping somehow seemed less appealing. But there were great plans for building a dome, and the land was luscious with a pond and a gorgeous view of the sunset, relatively secluded, and financially within our means. So we sublet the house, put a down payment on the land, and began an incredible summer experience.



Not having a house with all the conveniences of electricity, running water, lights, heat, stereo, telephone, etc., etc., etc. put me in touch with the land as I had never been before. A country house seemed like city life to me in comparison. We all set up tents and a kitchen and lived under the sky (and I must say the most disastrous weather conditions New York must have experienced in 50 years!). But our vulnerability was both a curse and an adventure. I was living in a dream as I picked spearmint leaves for morning tea, sang songs with my family around the campfire, huddled under a tarp during one of the many torrential rains trying to keep myself warm and my spirit high, going back to my tent at night frightened of boogey men and munching on my chocolate stash as I crawled into my sleeping bag praying my air mattress would hold the night.

We decided to wait until next summer to build as it seemed important to feel out the land first. We got a tool shed up as a start.



Days would pass when I wouldn't see anyone I didn't live with. I had very ambivalent feelings to the isolation. My sexual drive was very low that summer without the constant sexual stimuli and tension the city brings. I felt calm and able to put my energy into other areas. We would shop in Ithaca where we would also run to for comfort from the rains and the cold. Each of us had different needs for shelter and for outside stimuli.



As time passed, the need for contacting other gay people grew. There were endless trips to town trying to connect with the gay community there. But being summer in a college town, it was difficult. After living in one for four years back in Michigan, I didn't feel too positive about the situation anyhow.

Although it was an unforgettable experience, by the end of summer I yearned for a house once again where I could feel protected. The unusual amount of rain and cold seeped into my bones and eventually outweighed how far out living on the land felt. Disillusioned with gay life in town, my needs for outside stimuli and intimate relationships with new men increased. So back to Staten Island and gay politics and dances and meeting new people and struggling with each other.





Three of the group had had it with New York City and decided to rent an apartment in Ithaca for the winter. For the first time, the idea of living away from the city hit home. But the reality of it for me was very alien. I was getting as much from the city as ever, my life tied to it in a million places. I had a few affairs and learned a lot about my emotional patterns in love relationships. It was a winter of hard times in our house, many struggles revolving around the sexual politics of women and men living together. And with summer approaching, came a rebirth in plans for our land.

We then heard about a piece of land on the other side of Ithaca that had to be sold immediately. It was five times larger and more lush and varied, financially figuring to half as much an acre. We would have 100 acres, and 100 adjoining acres would be bought by friends, mostly gay, where a cabin already stood. The land is outrageous with apple orchards, berries, meadows, pine forests, hills, and streams. In a frantic week, the money was scraped up, and selling the other land, we bought it. The excitement was overwhelming. There was construction and architectural knowledge on hand and plans for a two story house began. For the first time, the feeling of long term stability hit me with simultaneous feelings of excitement and fright. A physical commitment to intensify our already strong emotional commitment.



Leaving the city that summer (it had become routine by then) was different. I knew I'd be back in the fall as I was not ready to commit myself to full-time country living, but at the same time in the back of my head I wondered, "Would this be the last time?" So, we rented a five bedroom apartment in town, and between us and visitors, the number reached twenty. We'd commute to the land daily, build and play and return to town. Some set up tents and camped out at times. Most of us felt that after a long, hard day building, a shower and warm bed were desirable. It was strange that summer to relate to the land as a work area, almost a job. This was so because work on the house was the priority while we were there, so for comfort and play, we would come "home".

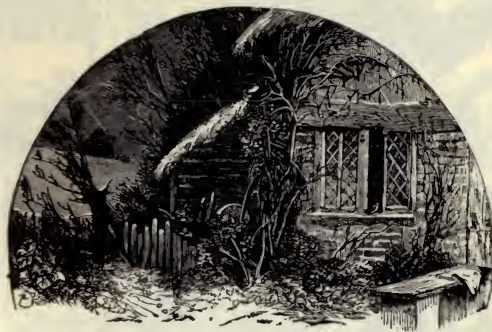
The idea of building our own house was intense and easy to romanticize (which I tend to do constantly). Physical labor had never appealed to me on any level. Nonetheless, building the house was a trip. As the floors and walls went up, the mysteries of construction fizzled. The excitement of eight or ten people lifting a wall was totally unique. To know where each piece of wood came from in a house I would live in really turned me on. I didn't think we could really do it, but by Labor Day the shell was finished, and we moved in. The roofing shingles, insulation, and such could be done later.

Many things came out that summer concerning differences in work energy. We had never undertaken such a huge project as a group before, especially one requiring so much physical energy--something none of us were fond of. And with it came intimidation leading to guilt from not working enough, resentment from working too much, guilt for feeling resentful, resentment for feeling guilty--you name it. The unique situation taught us much about each other and ourselves.

Our apartment in town had been a cause of great frustration for me. For all practical purposes, it was a crash pad--a situation I no longer felt comfortable in. To camp on the land would have been great for me if I could have gotten it together to do it. I felt closed in, and the need to get away overwhelmed me. So, as I was returning to the city shortly anyway, when the opportunity to get a ride to San Francisco came up five days after our September move to the land, I took it and stayed a month.

The need to get away alone was stronger than my need to explore the feeling of living in our self-built home. There would be plenty of time for that (not that I didn't spend days of indecision about it). I got a lot out of being away--it felt important to explore my independence from the group and my New York life.

When I returned to Staten Island, I found new joy in living in our house, and it felt good to be somewhere I knew so well. A few stayed up on the land getting the house together for the winter. The roof was finished, a well put in, insulation, a coal stove, a kitchen with a gas stove, and gas lights were set up.



I learned much about my needs last winter. I stayed home a lot and felt less connected to New York City than I ever had before. I felt very alienated from the faggot scene and found myself constantly surrounded by Lesbians I was close to. I hardly used the city at all for things I had in the past. Although comfortable at home, I questioned whether the old glow of New York would ever rise again over what now seemed dismal and empty. I thought often of it being my last year there and made vague decisions in my head to move upstate "for good". The house would be comfortable by spring, and the land was more than I could ever have dreamed for.



One thing, though, still kept gnawing at me: could I be happy there without a lover? The feeling of that kind of isolation frightened me, yet the city didn't seem to provide any satisfaction in that area either. My sexual drive felt low, but my romantic emotional needs were still pretty strong. I felt that the only way to deal with that dynamic was to work on lessening the need, rather than putting myself somewhere where the need could most likely be met (wherever that is!). It was a winter of much confusion and inner searching, but I came out of it with a strong desire to move away "for good". My decision paralleled the others in the house, and we decided to give up our home of three years. So, in May, we packed up and moved upstate to our new home--Lavender Hill.

The garden was well under way, and there was much work to be done. It is quite a different experience working on a house you're living in than one you commute to. I felt good and high there and used that energy to work on the house. Any low or frustration I felt was redirected positively to building. I worked hard on the front porch, balcony, and siding really enjoying it all. It was very satisfying to see tangible constructive progress. It felt important to be learning new skills that had always so intimidated me as a faggot.



I built a wiki-up (arched saplings covered with plastic) in the woods and planted a huge flower garden by it. The flowers were like my children, and great amounts of energy went to caring for them. I was feeling a tremendous need for solitude, and my structure became very important to me.

Lavender Hill was growing too. Structures went up on land--people finding niches of space to be alone to express themselves. A front yard formed with flower gardens surrounding it--we really got into flower planning and planting. Siding went up further finishing the house. A pond was dug, and a gas refrigerator bought. And endless upon endless partying and feasting and loving. We were also slowly becoming incorporated into the Ithaca gay scene.

I felt strong as I explored my feelings of celibacy, my sexual energy and desire to be involved in a love relationship being low. I used that energy to feel complete with myself. After a few months though, I began to feel restless again and wanted to get away. I decided to go to Montreal, a place I had never been and knew little about. I spent a wonderful week there and enjoyed spending the time alone. I enjoyed meeting new, interesting people as well. But after about ten days, I missed the land and felt like I wanted to return to Lavender Hill.

And the fall was beautiful with its magnificent colors. But as the days grew colder, I had to move into the house and abandon my personal space until the next summer. Seeing the flowers die was particularly sad.

Although the number of visitors decreased, I often felt closed in and frustrated at not having my own space. It is also hard to get away when there are no walls or doors, just fabrics over studs separating the rooms.



As the days grew shorter and the nights longer, I began to feel more restless than ever, and the fear of stagnation crept in. These feelings were, however, interspersed with many high, warm ties of togetherness. Although my commitment to the country had grown over the years, I was not ready to combat the bitter winter coming. This put me through guilt trips about failure to live up to my new "country boy" image. I had set up this personal image/expectation of moving to the land and that, combined with the positive value many put on rural endurance (it was more far out), made the whole schism guilt-ridden. My problem was not my city feelings, but rather my country expectations.

So, escape from winter combined with my growing need for solitude and independence drew me to the city once more. Before I left around Thanksgiving, I chose a site near the house to build a yurt (a permanent muffin-like structure) so that I could find the balance I need between communal living and independence. But New York City was not the place I wanted to be. I had been thinking of San Francisco for a few months, and the thought of living there excited me.

So, six of us came here from Lavender Hill for varying amounts of time this winter, all living in different parts of the Bay Area. And I find that I really need the city right now, and San Francisco seems like a whole, fresh new area to explore. I'm taking classes and learning things that I can take back with me in the Spring. I enjoy the independence of living alone (something I have rarely done) and structuring my time solely according to my needs. It feels good now not to have night time so limiting, and constant new stimuli to examine and feel.



But it only feels good here knowing what I have back on Lavender Hill. That security keeps me going. I wonder if I'll ever merge the split between my city needs and country needs. As long as I'm able to do it, maybe I won't have to. Maybe all my needs can't be expected to be met in one place, or is my city searching futile because my restlessness must be dealt with from within? Can the two worlds be integrated into a lifestyle, or is it all too schizoid? I guess only time will tell.



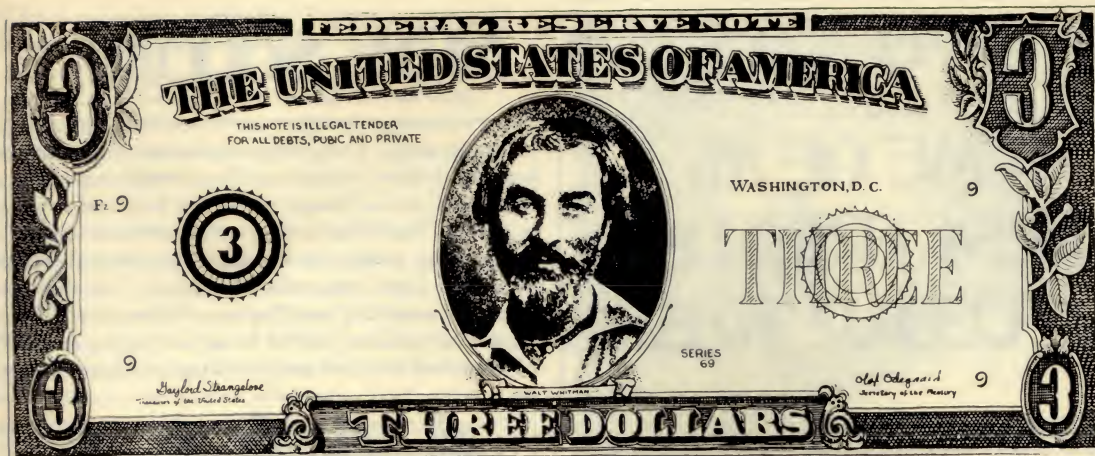
LEATHER

If I could have it my way,
I'd take me to a glade
and beseech the gods to send me
a bull/bear/buck for omen.
I'd stand naked in the glade,
under a long straight cape
and I'd wait.
Then the bull/bear/buck would come,
the moon in its horns
or dew on its fur,
or mistletoe in its antlers
like a walking sacred oak.
And it would walk right up to me
and look me in the eyes
and when I looked back, I'd know
it was saying, "I'm ready."
I would let my cape slide silent down
and kneeling or bending or turning around
I'd take that beast all the way in--
up my ass to my throat if it made him feel good--
and he'd start out slowly, slipping it in
making himself at home, feeling things out
and he'd slowly get faster
faster and harder
and he'd pump it right in there, up to the hilt
and he'd start panting now
and he'd work up a lather
of bear- bull- or buck sweat
and ram it home hard.
I'd know when he started
to squirt up my ass.
When he did, I would kill him.
I'd slit his bright throat
feel the warm liquid trickle
feel the warm liquid geyser
feel warmth on my body
feel heat up my ass.
He'd ride me and fuck me
till death did us part
then he'd stumble, roll eyes back
and give his soul,
a happy bear/buck/bull,
and still in my hold.

I'd slip off and mingle
his blood with my own
and write magick symbols
(a pentacted sator)
and then with my athame
with love and with care,
perhaps tears of thanks,
I'd open his flesh.
The birds would come down
and line up in order
for liver and eyeballs,
for testes and heart.
Then I would slit him from
chin-tip to tail, and
from front foot to front foot
and likewise in back.
I'd carefully, softly then peel off his skin.
I'd carve out an oak stump
and fill it with water
and leave it to soak for a week and a day.

The meat I would butcher;
the bones I would save
with horns claws or hooves
for special events.
The brains I would rub, when the soaking was done,
on the under skin side,
then I'd scrape off the hair
and hammer and chew till the leather was soft.
If I dyed it, I'd color it rich earthy brown,
the color of people, of dirt, wood and shit.
I'd make me a jacket
and one pair of pants
that fit hard and tight, with a furry pouched cod.
I'd fit them with bone and with horn/h hoof/claw jewels,
and then when I'd pass you on the streets or in the bars,
you'd turn and you'd stare and you'd ponder my game.
(Ask Sebastian or Rictor; there are those who know.)
But you're not among them; so you'd stare and you'd wonder.
And sooner or later, one braver than most
would walk up and say, "can I buy you a drink?"
And, "Oh, by the way, what skins do you wear?"
And taking my time, I'd fix you a stare
and pull your ear close by a fistful of hair
and my furry-pouched crotch would tickle your prick
when I whispered, "Oh, this thing? It's just an old trick."

--Jason Quicksilver



WHEN THE CRASH..

The crash of course has come. We are being hurled about by the dying twitches of the dinosaur's tail. I remember reading, as a schoolboy, that if you decapitate a feeding caterpillar, don't try it please, the head goes on eating for some time unaware that it is dead. That is where the technological economic colossus is today. I remember thinking after 500,000 of us peace people had marched in Boston in 1969, that the State would be neither moved nor shaken but when the economic cost of endless militarism was brought home to the workers including the workers who beat us up in downtown New York and elsewhere that the State would be moved and shaken. The American Dream failed to pay off and those who have given their lifetimes in pursuit of it will experience the anger and bitterness that the oppressed have felt till now, which is by no means to say that there will be any increase of empathy for such as you and me. So what does a faggot do? The weakness of Gay Liberation, as a movement, was that many in it wanted to change the laws and to have job security and be respected as people in their daily lives without realizing that the system must be changed and was collapsing anyway. Well, many of these people will soon be liberated from their concern with jobs, so what will they do? My personal solution was to spend the last two years marching in the streets, for Gay Liberation now instead of Peace and telling everybody in sight "I'm Gay."

A year ago I founded the Pittsburgh Gay Theater which was, and is, a Gay revolutionary anarchist nonviolent theater. Revolution means the end of violence. Change the violence into revolution. This was our message. I know that this theater helped raise the level of Gay consciousness in Pittsburgh and has helped to bring people out but we have not yet brought our message to the people. Perhaps we can't and perhaps there will be no need to. The message is written on the sky. Lately I have thought more and more about Gay communes and rural collectives, especially of the idea of forming Gay agricultural cooperative villages where crops could be grown, life lived and even children looked after. But there is a Buddhist type of problem: does one seek a

personal nirvana or plunge oneself where the suffering is deepest? It is a personal choice and one that events will make for many of us. We are fortunate in such times in having our Gay consciousness. We are, or should be, already beyond the major hangups of male chauvinism and Gay critics have been forthright in pointing out that Marxism and the New Left rely heavily on straight male dominance and the deification of the nuclear family. We have no reason to be hungup on the 9 to 5 job, the suburban home and the two-car garage or even a car of any kind. Many Gays seem to be increasingly abnegating the idea of one day settling down to live happily ever after with one's perfect lover: somehow that whole idea seems to have a genesis in the capitalist dream somewhere. Most of us have acquired a considerable measure of independence, and we have learned to critique ourselves and society in a way in which I believe the heterosexual man has not had to face. We must use these abilities in the best way we can in accordance with our individual consciousness. At a time when *Mother Earth News* is advising its readers to hole up with the wife and kiddies in the country somewhere with a year's supply of food (available from their advertisers at \$525 per person) and repel all comers with a shotgun, some sanity will be needed. We don't have to be "as good as" straight people or "better" than straight people; we just have to be ourselves and accept nothing less than that right. We must be brotherly to our Gay Brothers and Sisters, and we must try to be brotherly to our straight brothers and sisters, too. In many ways, their oppression is worse than ours as they are only just beginning to discover that they are indeed oppressed. Most important of all, as society begins to reconstruct itself we must be there. We cannot cling to the coattails of Socialism or Marxism or any other -ism in return for the promise of a good deal. We will only be cheated and disappointed. We must stand on our own two feet and dictate our own terms. In the meantime, whether on the farm or in the soup line may our consciousness continue to be raised and may a hundred flowers bloom.

John Upson
R.D. 2
Pottstown, PA 19464

TWO TALES OF NEW SODOM

SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE CEDAR TREES

I'm writing this from my room in our flat in "the Haight." We've been living here in San Francisco for about a month and, at this point, have fully adjusted to big-city living (except for a few new negative insights and awarenesses about cities that contact with the country has given us--or me, since I believe Arthur has had these awarenesses for a long time). I'm just beginning to really enjoy living in San Francisco and to feel my sense-of-self returning after spending over two years in Seattle which is culturally an incredible wasteland.

Actually, this is our second stay in San Francisco. We came out here almost three years ago when we abandoned New York for what, out of ignorance, we thought was the primeval wilderness of California. We quickly learned that this wasn't going to be the place and set off on a journey through British Columbia and Alaska in search of land. After a total of three months and with dwindling cash, we plopped down in Seattle and soon settled into 9-5 idiot office jobs with the hopes of accumulating enough cash to go land hunting again and to buy a piece of land outright (we didn't want any mortgages because we didn't want to spend the rest of our lives as enslaved employees). So we worked and worked and stashed everything away.



After about a year we met another Gay man named Bob, who was interested in our ideas about buying land and forming an all-Gay community. Together we formed a partnership called "The Wierd Sisters Partnership" with contract and all. When summer came, we went land hunting in northeastern Washington, and by September we found ourselves, by virtue of our membership in the Weird Sisters, the owners of forty acres of forest land--total cost \$5400 cash on the line. Now the name "New Sodom" had something concrete to be attached to. With deed in hand, we settled back for the winter into the zombie-like existence Seattle had to offer us.

Sometime at the beginning of the following June and after quitting our job, Arthur and I packed up our VW and drove out to New Sodom with the intention of spending the entire summer there. Bob remained at his job in the city, his interest in the land having dwindled considerably.

In retrospect, I can't help but have really good feelings about New Sodom, and I'm aware of a growing sense of security at the thought of having that land out there to go to. The lifestyle of complete dependence on "the system" that cities offer is what makes me feel this about the land. I feel very vulnerable here. I think this is because everything that I've ever known and been taught to trust or take for granted in my upbringing as a child of the city I can now see crumbling into dust all around me.



The time I spent at New Sodom was very hard, and I remained very aloof from the land for almost my entire stay of two and a half months (Arthur stayed for three and a half months--I fled back to New York in August). I refused to extend myself to the land at all, mostly because I was very frightened by it. It was all completely foreign to me (it wasn't like any bungalow colony I ever saw!), and after spending the last two years in drudgery in Seattle, I had neither the strength nor the desire to adjust to something so radically new. I felt I needed a break from laboring, and all I could see in New Sodom was labor of the hardest kind I'd ever encountered. Digging shit-holes, cooking on a temperamental single-burner kerosene stove, fighting off mosquitos, and just getting from one place to another through overgrown and unmarked forest was completely overwhelming.

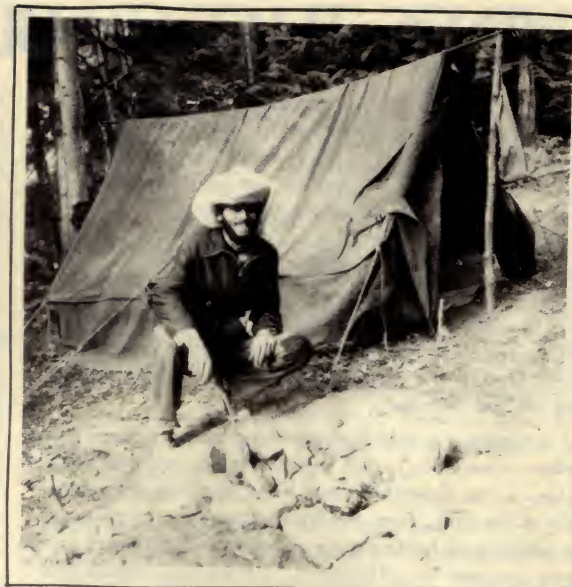
After about a month, we hit on something that established a routine for our days--the building of a log tool shed. With Bradford Angier's How To Build Your Home in the Woods in hand, we set to work. (This book has many faults, as we later discovered. The all-time best book we've discovered is a little known pamphlet called Building With Logs, available at the Shorey Bookstore, 815 Third Ave., Seattle, WA 98104, it costs \$2.50.) Each day, we'd collect logs--mostly fallen ones that remained off the ground and so seasoned without rotting--peel them, notch them, and nail them in place. The shed was to be about seven feet by eight feet, and we averaged about two layers of logs each day. Our work day was primarily determined by the sun, but I thought it interesting to note that most of the work on the shed was done between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. No doubt this was the result of conditioning by school and later by our former jobs. By the time I left for New York, the walls and ceiling beams were pretty much completed, and when I returned, exactly a month later, Arthur had cut out and framed the doorway and laid down the cedar poles for the roof and floor.

Our final two weeks on the land (before we expected the Autumn rains to begin) were spent laying tar paper over the roof and floor, and filling the sizable cracks between logs with cement. We wasted at least fifty pounds of cement before we were able to master the process to the point where the cement would stay in place and not fall through the cracks. With the chinking finished, we went to the mill in town and picked up some beautiful mill-ends from the dump to build the door with.

Mills waste an incredible amount of usable wood, most of which they feed into those despicable wigwam burners which fill the beautiful country air with brown crud, not to mention the repulsive odor. Mills also usually have a designated dumping area where they stash unmarketable pieces of milled wood called mill-ends. During the course of the summer, we saw one tool shed built entirely from mill-ends, and one lodge-sized log house, the upper level of which was built of mill-ends. The door that we made from the wood we found at the dump is incredibly sturdy and truly beautiful--each piece having seasoned to a different color. Unseasoned, newly milled pieces are also available at the dumps, and most mills are more than happy to let people cart away their "refuse," since it means less work for them.

I remember September 14th as the day we secured the door in place and so finished the shed. I remember stepping back and taking it all in: a pathway winding down the slope through the forest and opening into the small clearing just off of which stood the log structure raised two feet off the ground on four creosoted cedar posts, surrounded by darkness and the bare ebony trunks of towering cedar and tamarack trees. The first thing that came into my mind was Little Red Riding Hood slipping through the forest and coming across a little cottage in the deepest, darkest part of the forest. It was all a truly enchanting vision.

The next (our last) day at New Sodom was spent putting around and taking it easy. We did a little exploring and discovered that the place where we had struggled through our first summer was actually the darkest, coldest, and wettest part of the land, and that as little as one hundred feet away it was completely different. We saw very little sun during the summer because of the thick trees that shaded our campsite, but just the other side of the spring there were numerous clearings where the sun shone all day. You could see the surrounding mountains to the west and north to Canada through the trees that sway all day in the mountain breezes. We found this one spot that seemed to draw us to it--a clearing drenched in sun and backed by a lush forest, sloping uphill. Below it we could see the mountains through the trees, and around the clearing stood three tall birches, clusters of bushy Douglas maples, and tall succulent grasses. We sat there for a few hours. I began to feel very strong vibes from the place--sexual vibes. It was the first time in my life I'd ever been aware of feeling erotic towards non-human beings. The trees, the wind, the bright orange butterflies and birds which I could see gliding through the branches overhead--everything started to take on a very surreal quality and seemed alive with the grace of slow-motion photography. I smoked a joint, took off my clothes, lay back on a log,



and came all over the place--welcome to the site of our new house.

It's very easy to get into euphoric visions on paper, especially when writing about things in retrospect. I know that my experience of that spot on New Sodom was very definitely magical and real, but I also remember the vivid reality of the difficult times too. It all seems very distant now that we are here in San Francisco. City living is really the only life I've ever known, and despite all its drawbacks, familiarity with it does give me a certain sense of identity. I could never say that I intend to spend the rest of my life doing something which I know almost nothing about at this point. This is how I feel about living at New Sodom full time. I've heard of too many incidents where people commit themselves blindly to moving out onto the land without any real knowledge of where their own heads are at and having it end unsatisfactorily and sometimes disastrously for the land.

Our immediate plans in terms of the land are to spend the next few summers on it--as many summers as it takes to get acquainted with the land and to build ourselves a log house. There is no rush on anything, which I think is good. After the house is built, I don't really know what will happen. Arthur feels he would like to live up there full time. I can't say that that's what I'd like to do at this point, but I have thought about spending an entire seasons' cycle up there and feeling out what that's like.

I really feel a sense of confidence in the way we're both dealing with the land, mainly because I know it's all coming, not as a result of some sense of obligation or achievement, but from being in touch with our own feelings and needs and our concern for the survival and preservation of the living land. As long as we continue going about things in this way--seeing things in perspective and not over-extending ourselves--I think the relationship that develops between the land and each of us will be beneficial to us all, in addition to being an incredibly mind-blowing experience.



THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

Jay and I spent the last summer living in tents, for there were as yet no structures in New Sodom which consists of forty acres of dense forest land on the side of a mountain, with no access except an old overgrown Jeep trail that ends at our boundary line.

During the month of August, Jay left New Sodom and went back to New York City to visit his family and re-acquaint himself with his big-city past. For a month--thirty-one long days--I would be alone in the deep silence, living in the midst of a dark cedar forest and surrounded by the deer, grouse, and bear whose territory we had invaded.

I returned one day from shopping in the nearest town (seven miles away), and was startled to see that several holes, large claw-size, had been torn into the lower side of the tent, near the front entrance. I had made the mistake of letting some cut-off broccoli stems in the tent, wrapped in cellophane. Of course, I knew that all organic leftovers must be returned immediately, or they would attract scavengers. But I had slipped up this time, and one of the animal people had come to visit me while I was gone. Could it have been a bear? I didn't know, but I was always in fear of encountering a bear in New Sodom, since the berries and brush they eat grow in profusion on our land, and their shit was scattered all over the place. The incident reminded me of how scared I really was to be there alone without my beloved Jay. I didn't know that a greater scare was still to come.



There were always strange animal sounds in the night in New Sodom, but we had come to live with them. One of the first was a loud "whoosh, whoosh" noise (like some kind of giant blowing its nose), followed by the heavy vibrations of moving feet, which we could feel through the thin tent floor. We subsequently discovered that deer were the source of these, and we came to enjoy hearing them. The deer were enormous and strong, brown all over, except for their long white tails. Once, while I was working on sawing a log, I saw two or three of them casually grazing, not more than a hundred feet away. They were graceful and lovely neighbors.



No, it wasn't the familiar deer sounds that was to give me one of the greatest scares of my life. The event happened one night in that lonely August. After I had been asleep for a few hours, I was suddenly awakened by two loud, piercing, blood-curdling screams that sounded like they came from about twenty to thirty feet away from the tent. I sat up with a bolt. I could feel every pore in my body open. The sweat was pouring down my body in little streams, making my down sleeping bag sticky and wet. My God, I thought, what is it? I was afraid it would smell that I was afraid.

I remembered a conversation I had had a few days before with a neighbor who said beware if you ever hear what sounds like a woman screaming, because it's a mountain lion. That's what it sounded like. The screams had a cat-like hue.

I was scared shitless. Being fresh from the city, I had had almost no experience camping, and here I was alone in the middle of the forest with nobody around for miles. Was the animal stalking me? I remembered the incident of a few days before when I found claw marks on the tent, and I had horrified visions of a mountain lion tearing its way into the tent, and having me for supper. I thought of running to Schmutzig, our trusty VW bug, who was parked at the end of the jeep trail that borders on our land. But that was hundreds of yards away. The animal might pounce on me before I got there.

I turned on my flashlight, and hurriedly paged through Bradford Angier's book *How To Stay Alive in the Woods*. What a laughable sight I must have been! God, I'm such an academic. Anyway, I found the section on what-to-do-when-you-encounter-a-beast: Keep cool, and talk to the animal. Some help! (Actually, experienced people say that that's what you should do; animals pick up very quickly on your vibes.) Well, I wasn't about to go out and say, "Here, kitty, kitty" to a mountain lion.

Turning on the flashlight gave me an idea. I remembered that all animals of the forest are terrified of fire. I hurriedly put on pants and shoes, ran out of the tent armed with my trusty Redcross knife, and built the quickest campfire I've ever made in my life. Fortunately, there was a huge pile of dry cedar bark nearby, left over

from our work on building a log tool shed. I dumped the shavings into the fire pit, and lit a match. Wonderful! A bright yellow light shed its protective aura over the whole campsite, while I grabbed the Swedish band saw and quickly cut up a mound of hefty logs, and threw them onto the fire. For me, at that time, the only significant difference between humans and other animals was that we could make a fire. The ancient myth of Prometheus passed through my mind: the gift of fire was a gift from the gods.

That night had an uncanny, magical quality to it. The shriek of a wild animal, my fear, the dark of the forest, and then the divine fire. Comforted by the fire, I was finally able to fall asleep, and had an uncanny dream.



I dreamed that I was a young woman who was being held captive by the police. The pigs were keeping me in some kind of camp. They had drugged me and were tormenting me by the sounds of some wild animal they kept nearby. Then the scene shifted. I was a very old man. I was in a wood-paneled room that looked like a library or study. Some kind of trial was in progress in the room next door in which a policeman was charged with something insidious (I don't remember what). I was to be a witness for the prosecution against the cop. But just before I was called on to testify, my folio, containing carefully documented evidence against the pig, was missing. I knew the cops or their agents had stolen it. I was in a quandry: Should I testify anyway, relying on my memory? As I was pondering the question, my eyes scanned the walls of the room. There were inscriptions in gold on the walls, the way there sometimes are in public buildings. One of them caught my eye: "Let the word be spoken, and the truth made known." I decided to testify, and entered the courtroom, at which point I woke up.

This dream was very important for me because I knew it had to do with my attitude toward the land and how I would continue to relate to it. When Jay and I first left New York nearly three years ago to go land hunting, I turned my back on my life as a would-be academic and a city-dweller. I gave away nearly all my books. Jay and I left the city to look for land in the country and to begin a revolutionary new lifestyle.

But between the time we left New York and the time we finally bought the land, I had fallen back into the habit of scholarly reading, forced into it by the drab and uninviting social scene of Seattle, where we were living. In the process, I had come across a lot of provocative material in history and anthropology having to do with Gay people. Much of this stuff deals with the people called "witches" in the Middle Ages. I was excited by these discoveries, but at the same time I was torn: on the one hand, I wanted to give up city addictions and live a simple communal rural existence; on the other hand, I knew this material about Gay people was potentially explosive and should be worked up into a book. I was also torn in another way: I didn't like the self-centered, book-wormish part of my personality, and wanted to be liberated from that, devoting more energy to cultivating personal relationships; I thought it would be easier to do that in the country.

The dream reminded me that a very deep part of my personality was committed to study and research and that I had developed a strong historical case against the pig society in which all Gay people live. The terrible fear of the animal that night and the dark loneliness of the forest had jolted me, allowing deep feelings to come to the surface. In a way, I felt as if I had been visited by an animal spirit, and that the land itself was telling me it was okay to keep and cherish the part of my personality that loved study and required urban support.

I realized that I wasn't faced with an either/or situation. Jay and I could spend part of each year living in the country, working toward the goal of rural self-sufficiency, and part of the year in the city, meeting our urban needs. I no longer felt guilty over my urban needs. I didn't feel that satisfying them was some kind of political cop-out.

A few days after I was scared by the animal, I discovered from a local resident that wild cats do indeed prowl in the area of New Sodom, but that they are harmless to humans. In fact, the scream may even have come from nothing more terrifying than a screech-owl. In retrospect, I feel a little silly about my melodramatic reaction. Yet, I also feel I learned something valuable that night both about myself and the land.



Arthur is writing a series of articles/explorations based on his research into witchcraft. The articles are appearing as a series in *Fag Rag* (Box 331, Kenmore Sta., Boston, MA 02215) beginning with the recent Christmas Blasphemy Issue.

FOREST SHELTER

AN INTRODUCTION TO SLAB ART...

A tree is a living being. Trees supply our life breath, our air. It is vital to remember this when interacting with our green leafy friends. Not just ideologically, but when one plants one, kills one, eats one, or gives of one's self to the plant kingdom (like composting your shit).

In other words, we should develop a day to day respect for these delicate selfless creatures. A good place to work on this is by using wood that would otherwise be wasted. Here are some sources i know of for finding recycle-able wood:

(1) Ocean and Great Lake beaches are often covered with healthy logs and driftwood.

(2) Fallen and unused butchered trees can be used as poles, beams, and...the ambitious one can make rustic boards from them.

(3) Old barns and shacks often contain fine, usable historic wood.

(4) Sawmills often have unusable, rough wood which they happily give away. Slabs are the barky, outer part of trees, usually they are discarded. Slabs can supply a constant source of fine wood, for one who can transport them to their work area.

A sawmill exists near our northern Minnesota homestead. That's where i first discovered this source of wood, and i shall never forget the experiences i had while working with slabs.

Every slab is unique, and they are cast away from the straight, calculated cut boards. Being at times an out-cast myself (from myself), i found great pleasure and stimulation while working with slabs.

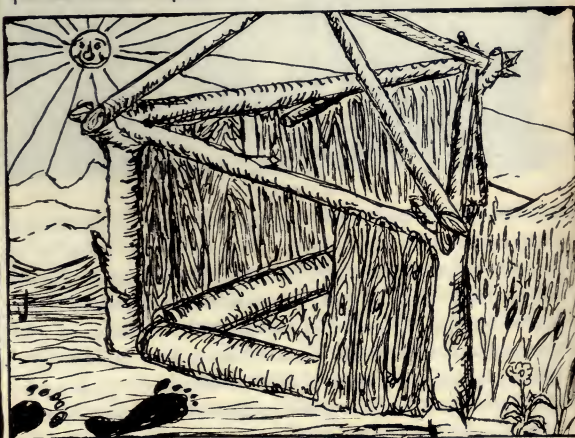
We made regular trips to the sawmill, choosing particular slabs for special uses. For building a treehouse frame i chose thick cedar ones. For building little boxes i chose thin barkless ones.

There were two shelters completed last year, built entirely of slabs. One was a triangular goat shed. In building the goat shed, we placed three 7-foot poles in the earth. Then all the poles were brought together by lashing smaller limbs to the very tops. Baling twine was used to lash all poles.

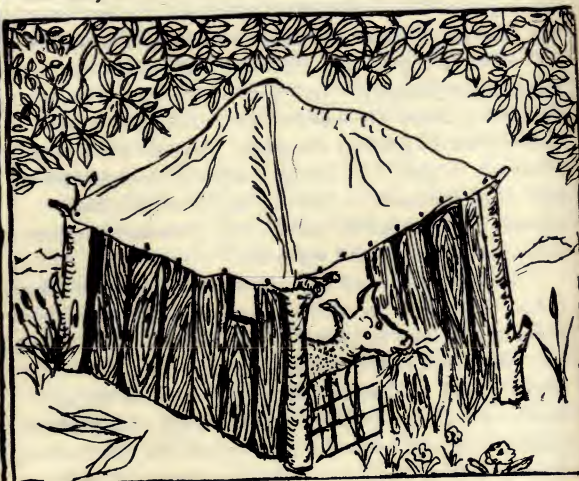
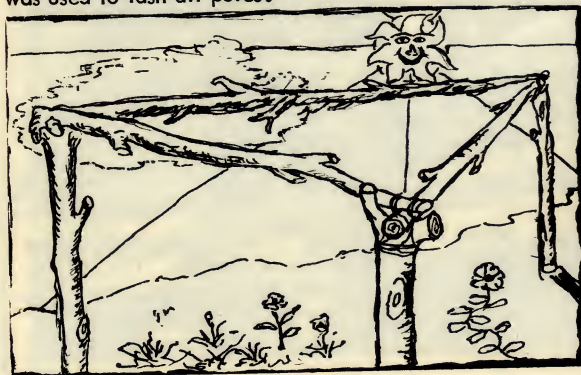
Next poles were tied to the corners, at an angle upwards...where they unite at a center point. Giant logs were placed on the earth, between the corner posts.



Slabs were then nailed to the logs, and the lashed poles. This completed the walls.

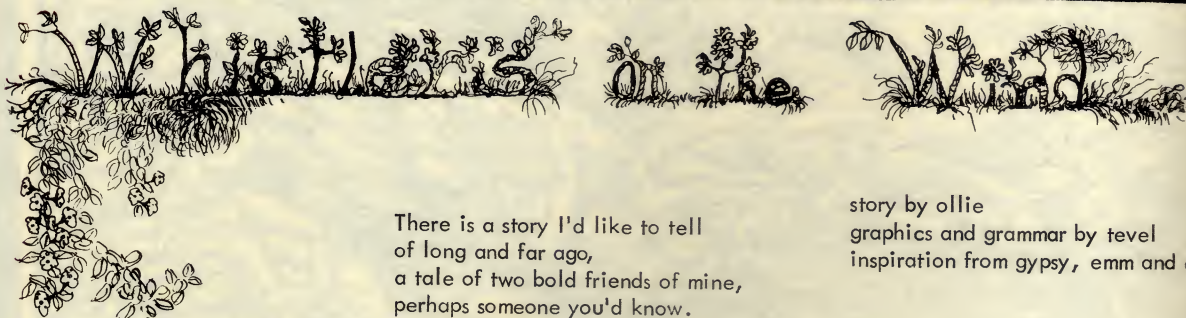


Finally, a tarp was thrown over the top, and tied securely to the lashed poles.





COLOR PAGE



There is a story I'd like to tell
of long and far ago,
a tale of two bold friends of mine,
perhaps someone you'd know.

story by ollie
graphics and grammar by tevel
inspiration from gypsy, emm and cee

Take heed, though, reader, to you a warning
before we can begin,
That this could happen to any of yonder
whistlers on the wind...



There was a time, once upon ago, when all the land
for manyabouts was caught in the grips of a curious
sameness. And for this strange feeling there arose not
a single question, for the sameness spread to the people
too, and not just the houses and the streets and the
valleys.

One such valley flowed for many a mile between
steep and tall ridges, cutting it off quite severely from
the usually flat countryside. A dweller here would of-
ten find himself travelling for many days to reach one
end or the other. The plains surrounding the valley
were also affected by this sameness. It had the feeling
of being borne of a curse, for nothing ever changed as
things are given to in nature. It hung upon the trees,
which were all of equal height and kind. A blue-gray
haze was the usual aspect of the sky. Never did rain
or snow come to the valley. It was rarely known to get
very hot, or very cold, for that matter. This was the
land called Fanganoor.

Emm and Cee, which are what my friends were called
and are called still, had lived in Fanganoor for as long
as they could remember. They stood barely three feet
high, and were never known to grow or shrink an inch.
Their size was just right for them to live beneath the
roots of a huge old pine tree whose roots had grown over
the remains of fallen timber. Long ago the dead wood
rotted away, leaving the roots spreading out into the
ground. This formed a hollow beneath, with just the
proper number of windows and doors. Emm and Cee were
delighted with their root home when they found it. Af-
ter a bit of tidying up and brushing off the moss, they
had a quiet forest hideaway.

What a place it was! Tall pine trees shaded a forest
floor bedded in shamrocks. They had all the furry
friends they needed to call on when they were lonely.
And there was a curious way of carrying on with all the
animals around them. Instead of talking as most folks
did, Emm and Cee would whistle. Through the needles
the wind would waft their notes. The gayest tunes were
heard in the trees when they whistled to each other. But
best of all, Emm had Cee and Cee had Emm. When one
was up, the other was down. Together they went side-
ways.

Yet the times were not always the best for the tree
dwellers. There was a faint uneasiness in the air. Of-
tentimes the birds would whistle a mysterious song which
made everyone listen. Emm and Cee wondered, especial-
ly at these times, what the warble could mean. For the
wind brought the message of a cold gray mist about the
plains and a curious sameness everywhere.

"What could this be," said Emm to Cee,
"that chills their voices so?
They're telling of a frightful land.
I wonder, should we go?"

"Not I," said Cee, and slapped a knee.
"Not ever will I roam.
That land I know is Wickedee.
It's far away from home."



They knew a bit of what the birds sang, for long ago had spread the word of the dreadful Marmosets of Wickedee. They were stunted, curious creatures with spindly legs and pointed noses. This made them look quite like plucked chickens. More, they all looked the same. It was said that mysterious and frightful doings went on in Wickedee, and that they were folks to stay away from.

Well, Emm was never one to pay much attention to what co had been told. Co thought that it was quite silly to be afraid of somewhere that you've never been, for unless you go, how would you ever know what a place was like. To this Cee had no good answer, but wasn't yet convinced:

"But Emm, my friend, I just don't know, what could befall us if we go.
We might forget the whistle sweet
we sing to all the birds we meet,
or worse, to go where strange winds blow
that might, perhaps, cause us to grow!"

And Emm's reply:

"A chance, a chance we'll have to take.
We're not alone you know,
for I've got you and you've got me,
so together let us go."

A little courage was all they needed to get them on the road. They closed the shutters of their pine tree home, bade farewell to all their friends, and whistled good-bye to the birds overhead.

It was a long, long walk to Wickedee. Only a winding trail lay ahead.



For days they walked. At dusk they rested. Emm and Cee had forgotten how many nights had been spent beneath the stars. The upright heads of the pine trees seemed to reach forever towards the sky. They huddled together on such nights, wishing at times for a familiar whistle, thrilled at times for being on such an adventure. Throughout the trip they noticed many of the mysteries of which the birds whistled. The entire landscape was curiously the same. All the other travelers they met were peculiarly quiet, giving nothing more than a handwave in passing. Likewise, when they climbed out onto the plain above Fanganoor, there were miles and miles of flat brown fields, which looked

unkept for years. Here they met no travelers, for it was said that there was nothing safe outside the valley which would interest anyone. Anyone, that is, except Emm and Cee, who had an immense curiosity for finding out what the land of Wickedee could hold in store. Indeed, the closer they came, the more fearless and excited they got.

At last, after nearly a full moon of travelling, they reached the end of the plain, which signaled the beginning of the land of Wickedee. Here the fields merged into a line of woods extending to the east and west as far as they could see. As they entered the trees they noticed that the forest became darker and thicker. Not a hummingbird whistle or squirrel chatter was to be heard. In fact, there were no signs that any creatures lived in the woods at all....



"What ho!" they sang, as up they came to the land of Wickedee.

"We've made it fast, we're here at last, and now, the mystery!"

Emm and Cee were not quite sure which way to turn. There were many paths in the woods, all of which looked the same. No animals were about to give a hint which way to go. What there was, however, was a familiar odor which came to them from the west. Could it be? It smelled like vegetable stew! So their bellies said to follow their noses, and off to the west they went.

Soon they came upon a clearing in the forest. There in its center was a tiny log house, with one side covered in sod up to the roof. In front stood a spindly old woman slowly stirring a huge vat of soup. "Aha!" she cried, turning around to meet them. "I've been expecting you." Emm and Cee were quite taken aback at hearing this, for they couldn't imagine who told her they were coming. "The crows," the woman went on, "the crows. They told me you've come to solve the riddle of the birds. You've got a rough trip ahead, so best you eat some stew to keep your strength. I'm an old, old Marmoset you see, long ago cast out for my strange ways. But ever since the wizard's spell, the ways of Wickedee have been stranger."

Now Cee was first to make reply,
Co asked of hir, "But why, oh, why
could anyone want to take this land
and make it sad, or make it bland?"

We've come so far from Fanganoor,
walked many a mile to reach your door.
And now you tell of a wicked man,
who's brought a sameness to this land."

Emm was next to say a word,
"There's nary a creature, not even a bird.
How could anyone cast a spell
to make this place unfit to dwell?"

"I see you're quick and bright," replied the woman. "And so was this wizard. He's long dead now, but his magic lives on and on. No one can remember what it was like before the spell. Only the birds who fled from Wickedee know what was here before. And it's a rare one that can talk to the birds, you know. If I were you, I'd have some stew, then go look for the wizard's hut. It's down this path a few days on. Perhaps there you will find the clue, to make our lands alive and new."

So eat they did, then bade the woman a warm farewell. Again it was to be a long road ahead, and perhaps the biggest adventure of all.



So down the trail they went, with eager hearts and throats bursting in song. They were having such a good time, that they didn't notice the trees getting thicker about them, or the path becoming narrow and rough. It was winding up and down hills, over rocks and through streams. In some places the path became difficult to make out at all. Many moons had passed since anyone had traveled this way. But on they trudged, though their feet were wet and sore.

It was soon to be dark. They had yet to come across a clearing to bed down for the night. Never before had they been in a forest which had no animals to talk to. There was an uneasy feeling in the air. Finally, too tired to walk on, they decided to just stop where they were and sit on the ground until morning. Nightfall came with no moon or shining stars. The blackness came like coaldust. Emm and Cee could not even see each other.

"I hope this night's a short one, Cee," said Emm in a quivering tone. "I never thought we'd ever be so lost and completely alone."

"Now don't you fret," came Cee's reply. "We're not alone you know. We've got each other to sleep by, and morning soon will show."

"I've got an idea to pass the time, that won't need any words. Let's whistle on the v...d c tunny rhyme, the way we call the birds."



So this they did. It had been a long time since they practiced their whistles. They found to their surprise that they were as good as ever. In no time at all they had completely forgotten the cold and dark and were carrying on like meadowlarks.

Suddenly Emm stopped whistling and stared past Cee into the night.

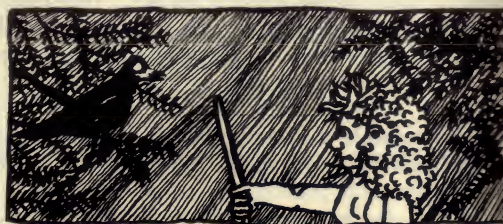
"Cee, oh Cee, look past your knee. You're in for a big surprise. For right beyond the shadows here is a pair of huge red eyes!"

Sure enough, piercing the blackness were two glowing fire-eyes staring straight at them. Slowly they began to move away. Emm and Cee both knew at once that they should follow. As if by magic they flew through the night. No longer were their feet tired or sore. No longer was the path rough or difficult to walk. They followed the red dots through the night.

As daybreak came, they discovered the eyes belonged to a huge black crow that was somehow called by their whistling. It was nearly noon when the crow finally stopped flying and perched in a pine tree at the edge of a ravine. The bird began to whistle with a voice of wisdom and age. Co told them a mysterious tale:

"Long, long ago had the land of Wickedee been beset with strife. Marmoset was against Marmoset, and a friendly or cheerful face was rarely to be seen. Everyone was out for themselves, trying to be better than the next. Anyone who was different in the least was treated very badly. Many people were chased away and had to live in the woods.

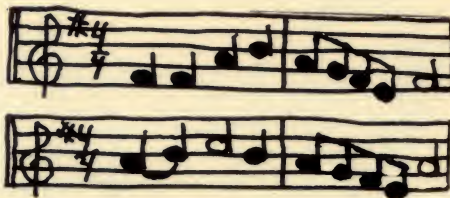
"A wizard there was in Marmoset land, who hated all this strife. So one day at the end of winter season he put a spell over all the land. From that day on, everything looked the same. The people acted the same and talked the same. No one was different anymore. Worst of all, he locked up Spring in his spell box, so that nothing could ever change again in Wickedee. All the birds and the animals fled from the forest. And since this time the sameness has been spreading, so that even Fanganoor is becoming much like Wickedee. The only way to break the spell is to find the box, break the lock, and set Spring free."



And where was the box? As the crow finished his tale, he spread his huge wings and dove into the ravine, flying to a ledge on which stood, most extraordinarily, the wizard's spell box. In a flash the bird disappeared.

Down the rocks scrambled Emm and Cee. Very carefully they climbed to the ledge. Together they tugged and yanked at the lock until at last--it broke free. With their hearts in their throats, they carefully lifted the lid. Out in a rush came climbing vines, growing flowers of every petal and color, drifting aromas of life come new in the forest. And best of all--whistling! Softly it began, growing louder and louder, until the air was filled with tunes of every harmony. Soon, a bird appeared here and a bird there, squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons, foxes, bears, and rabbits until the whole ravine was full of creatures come back to their forest.

Emm and Cee were filled with joy and whistled on the wind to all their friends about. Together they sang:



"There's got to be a better way
to live together day by day;
to work and play and share the fun,
and sing our songs beneath the sun."

And though we might be different now,
perhaps to grow or change somehow;
we know we've got a job to do,
and that's to make the world brand new."

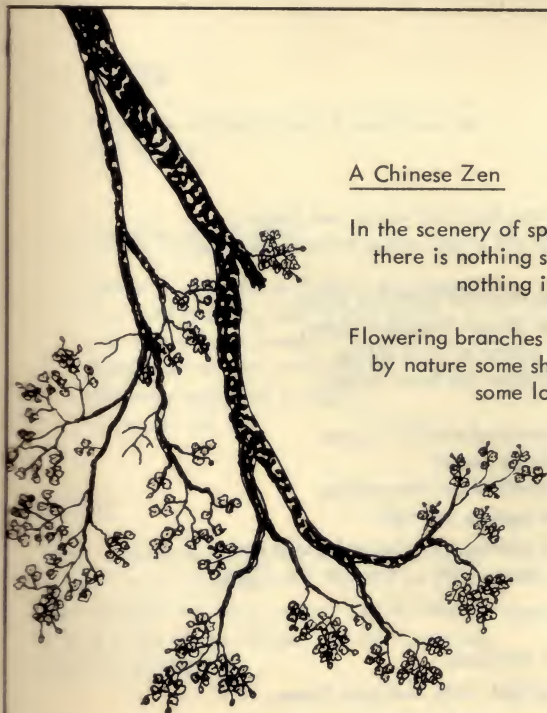
The End

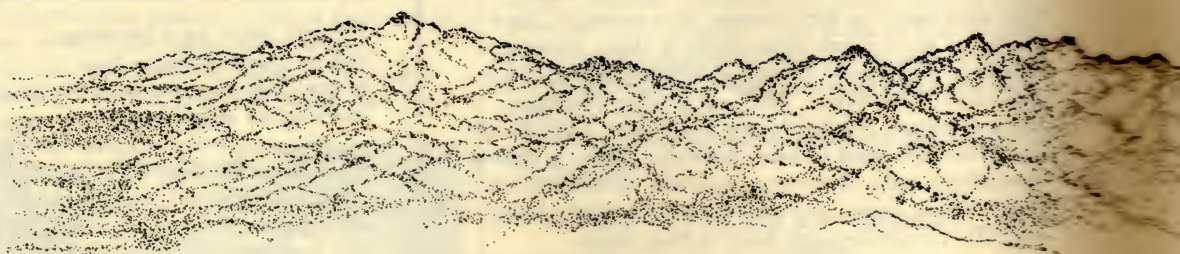


A Chinese Zen

In the scenery of spring
there is nothing superior
nothing inferior;

Flowering branches are
by nature some short,
some long.





The People of Dream

Day passes into night
And again into day:
We are the people.
Our fires are bright through the long winter;
In summer, we walk naked in the hills.

We are the people of dreams.
In the night we sing our dreams.
In the bright dawn we dance our dreams.
In a good land we live,
Upon the good earth we are walking.
Two-legs and four-legs and wings of air
We live in peace.

Our eyes are old eyes,
Deepset in our skulls;
Our eyes are the hooded eyes of cats
Our eyes are wise with the wisdom of dreams
Our eyes burn with the strength of our dreams.

Beside our fires our voices are bright;
We sing old songs, songs from our dreams.

We sing the rain from the skies
And the salmon from the water,
The power of wild things
That have not been tamed.

Dwellers-in-the-Wild-Places
Lords of the Forest
Silent Lords of the Mountains,
Your powers we call;
With visible form let us behold you
As you dance with us through the night.

Caradoc ap Cador
© copyright Earth Religion News, 1974

Running

I ran into a tree before it could see me
And it hurt.

Question and Answer

Can you reach for a limb in the night?
If a wind can you will if you try?
Can you catch a breath?
Water can so why can't you?
Will you ever find an egg?
If you do tell me.

A Book

When a book has made its way into a room,
A spell is put upon it.
The changes are quite unique and the spell is penetrated
Into a place where flowers are not forgotten
And the wind blows.

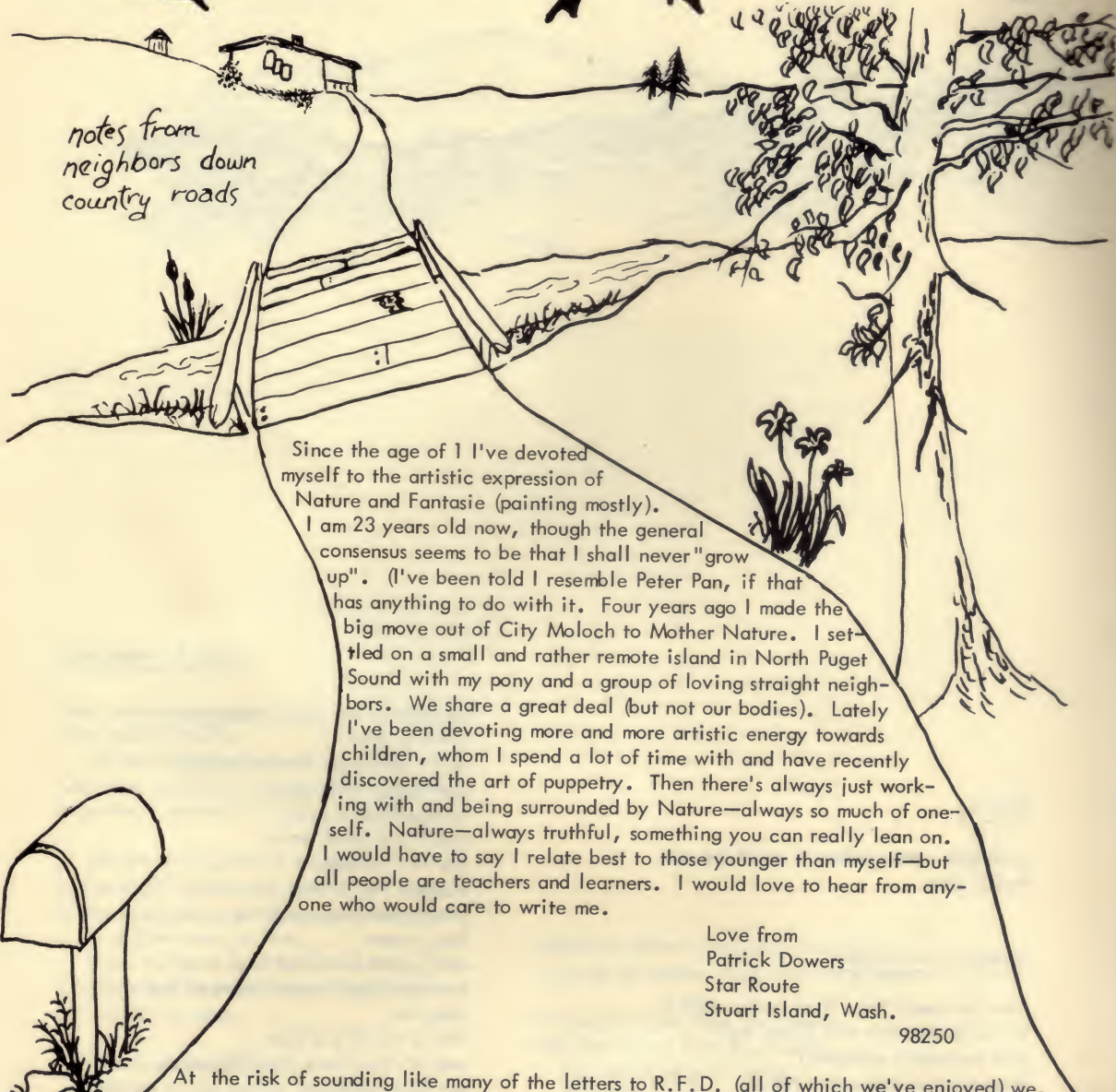
Russell Ross

robert

goodbye it was nice knowing you
nothing more
as it's obviously headed to less
and you go with less
because less is less
and if you think more
you're in trouble
because less is less.
hah! you always told me
less is more
and i can't do it that way
because then i expect more of less
than less
this is this is this is that
and it's from here that exists
not from there and
there exists from here.
hello goodbye again

Country Roads

notes from
neighbors down
country roads



Since the age of 1 I've devoted myself to the artistic expression of Nature and Fantasie (painting mostly). I am 23 years old now, though the general consensus seems to be that I shall never "grow up". (I've been told I resemble Peter Pan, if that has anything to do with it. Four years ago I made the big move out of City Moloch to Mother Nature. I settled on a small and rather remote island in North Puget Sound with my pony and a group of loving straight neighbors. We share a great deal (but not our bodies). Lately I've been devoting more and more artistic energy towards children, whom I spend a lot of time with and have recently discovered the art of puppetry. Then there's always just working with and being surrounded by Nature—always so much of one-self. Nature—always truthful, something you can really lean on. I would have to say I relate best to those younger than myself—but all people are teachers and learners. I would love to hear from anyone who would care to write me.

Love from
Patrick Dowers
Star Route
Stuart Island, Wash.

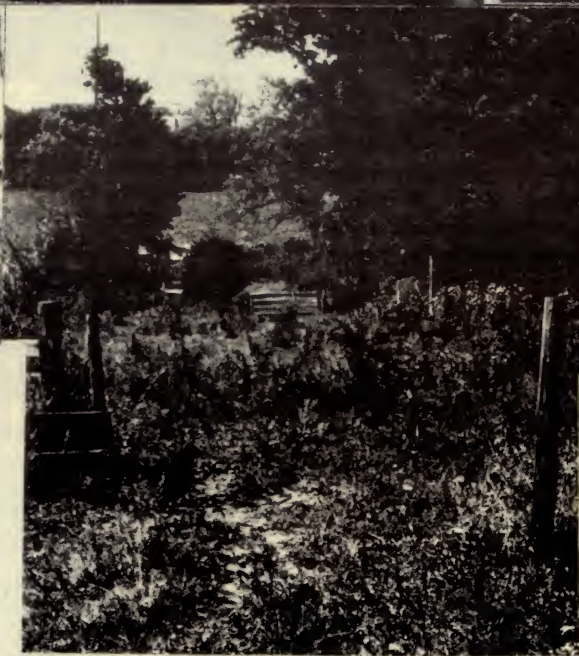
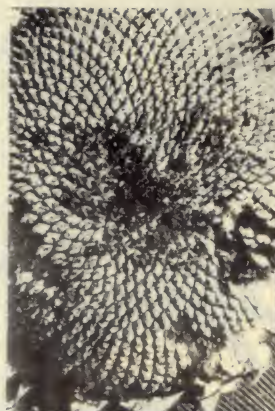
98250

At the risk of sounding like many of the letters to R.F.D. (all of which we've enjoyed) we, too, have cut wood today, lit the kitchen fireplace and now we get the quiet things of evening done. Gary has his sewing machine out and has just finished his sixth quilt made from old levis. The various shades of worn out blue jeans have been assembled in authentic designs like Indian rugs. One a thunderbolt design, the next in a corn pattern, another in bullseye symbol—and so on.

I catch up on correspondence for us both and do some bookwork on our design business which we maintain on weekdays in an old adobe studio in Albuquerque. Earlier today we hauled water from Tunnel Springs, near an abandoned fish hatchery, 2 miles further up the Sandia Mountains near our old adobe home. It's an old coal mining cabin on the edge of a shallow canyon. Our view to the west includes Cabezon, a fantastic natural monument which balances the sun on July 4, or thereabouts, each year. Already we have several healthy fruit trees and a large vegetable garden. We love our lane and house, and our plans of additions (we have spotted an abandoned log cabin, which the ranger will assist us in acquiring) are vast. A great rock pool (for washing mining carts a century ago) is below the wind mill—we hope to clean it soon and have a plunge for hot days.

Bob and Gary

(cont'd p.38)



MORE LETTERS

Dear RFD,

In strange moments when that quiet descends along the cold snow, without the whispering wind, I see myself complete, unlike other days when winds blew hot and cold passion across my landscape.

I was glad to receive your issue. It was quite evident that a small group of friends put it together. I was not surprised at all by the piece about mother earth news. I have long been disenchanted by their folksie and old timey put on and of course their obvious racist and sexist stand. Oh, there are ads from gay men but they are usually of someone looking for their ideal.

I live alone, I find that I often wish for one to share my life with but as a friend; for lover is too possessive, a friend who loves me is always welcome.

I have lived by this creek on and off for over two years, and now that I have a job at the local mill it will be more on than off.

It seems that I have come full circle in ten years from coming out in 64 to being alone in 74. It is hard to relate to many people here, and I know of only two gay people within 40 miles. But I have books and music and lumber and plans to work on the cabin.

With love,
Jim, Mendocino County
c/o RFD



Being just another country boy would enjoy receiving your newspaper if you have a prisoner fund.

Yes, for cashing an insufficient check I've already compiled three years here in California prisons. One year because of the check and two years because they know I'm a homophile and because of this are refusing me parole. It seems all homos are serious threats to society.

So may I receive a copy of your newspaper? Also enjoy correspondence with others.



Roger C. Hanson B40983
Dorm 322 Bed 32
P.O. Box Aw
San Luis Obispo, CA 93409

(Subscriptions to RFD are free to all inmates of prisons and mental hospitals. If you care to sponsor a subscription for a prisoner, please let us know.)

Many many letters have come in from you--too many to print all of them. So we chose, edited and tried to retain the essence of what you were saying. Some of you gave permission to use your address, some did not, but most gave no indication either way. When writing, please indicate whether you wish your address included. If you wish, we will list your address as "c/o RFD", and we will forward any mail you receive.

If something that someone has drawn or written moves you, we encourage you to write if the address is listed, or c/o RFD--such as "Lotus Divine, South Dakota, c/o RFD, P.O. Box 161, Grinnell, Iowa 50112."

Letter Writing.



12. Correspondence.—There is no better school or better source for self-improvement than a pleasant correspondence between friends.

....I'm trying to get a farm/village colony started here in Colorado at an old abandoned mission. I'm needing a bunch of guys who are interested in investing in lands and properties, and have a pioneering spirit to rebuild up a rundown area. I'm interested in brothers who are not money mad and would like to work with and for the brotherhood on a mainly barter system, and what you might call a non-profit organization; altho it'll be a free enterprise, and anything they want to sell outside the colony is OK and they get full value, they don't have to divvy with the others. As a matter of fact, that will be the main source of money. In the colony, life will go at an easy pace and there'll be time for God and helping brothers. All property will be owned individually. There is a Catholic mission church, that will be pastored by a homo priest, but there's no religious restrictions. Any other ministers who want to establish other churches and other members who want their own religion, may do so. The basis of this colony will be spiritual and NOT mercenary. It can be a very pleasant and rewarding life and a refuge for the homeless kids who want someone to belong to and the oldsters who no longer have any one to care about them. By living the simple agricultural life, there'll be plenty of food and shelter for all in a nation that is now faced with a critical food shortage. What I'm interested in is trying to promote the Mission and finding good sensible down-to-earth homosexuals who REALLY want a good life. If you know of, or can get word to, agricultural homosexuals, I'd greatly appreciate it. It's very hard for us country guys to be able to contact one another. I was in hopes your RFD would be able to get a bunch of us together. I'll cut for now and hope all is well with you.

Adios Amigo,
Richard Carey, Colorado
c/o RFD







"AT THE PASS"

a modern morality play



Note: permission from the author to produce this play is not required; in fact, dialogue has been omitted so that the actors can speak from their hearts. Substitution of characters, setting and issues is encouraged.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MR. GARTZ; a prototypical hippie dude, quite macho
 FEMININA; a prototypical hippie lady, "old lady" to MR. GARTZ
 CAMAS SWALE; diaphanous faggot spirit, and
 PARSNIP SWALE; his more earthly companion
 MINORA ARCANA; and
 MAJORA ARCANA; spiritual dykes and neighbors to the SWALES
 GARBANZO PATTI; city dyke and visitor at the ARCANAS
 EVERYFAG; visiting at the SWALES
 LISA FREECAT; friend and neighbor of the SWALES and the ARCANAS
 SIMULTANEOUS WAFFLE; Colonel in the 1st Division of the Sierra Club
 HERR RED TAG; prosecutor for Building Code authorities*
 MYGURL (later PETRONELLA); HERR RED TAG's secretary
 GENERAL JELLY; a matronly guardian angel
 various communards with guns

ACT I

1st Scene: the big room at the main house of a rural commune; GARTZ and FEMININA, the ARCANAS and SWALES and their visitors, LISA and WAFFLE have gathered for weekly singing. CAMAS is introducing the new piece for the evening: the Oregon State Song, in four part harmony. A minor spat breaks out over the lyrics of the song, which all agree are imperialistic, sexist; good humor prevails, and major word substitutions are introduced so as to make the song acceptable. A hearty rendition of the State Song concludes the opening scene.

* In their area, a red tag is placed upon a condemned building before it is bulldozed.

2nd Scene: stage same, characters are talking informally, during the tea and gingerbread "break" in the singing. PARSNIP is stuffing his mouth full of gingerbread, loudly saying how good it is. EVERYFAG is flirting with MR. GARTZ, who is disoriented but pleased by the attention of this fancily dressed faggot from the big city (everyone else is in common country clothes, occasionally colorful and creative but always dirty-looking). Everyone gathers around as FEMININA reads a letter from HERR RED TAG. The letter states that within three weeks, they will have to evacuate their residences, or bring them up to Code, which is impossible. Everyone has an idea about what to do, but there is neither the time nor the will to continue the discussion then. A meeting is planned at the commune in question the next day.

ACT II

1st Scene: planning meeting at the GARTZ' commune. Everyone is crowded into a much smaller, more rustic, building, with dogs, children running in and out. SIMULTANEOUS WAFFLE has been to visit the Building Commissioner earlier in the day, and tries to explain how reasonable they are; his explanation is regularly interrupted by his very thick glasses which keep sliding down his nose. WAFFLE is extremely nearsighted.

MR. GARTZ outlines his military plan to cut HERR RED TAG off at the pass with guns. Various communard men mutter agreement. Hot debate ensues, CAMAS and the ARCANAS leave in disgust at the uncompromising male ego-tripping. PARSNIP and GARBANZO argue valiantly but unsuccessfully for a more imaginative plan, which would minimize violence and hold out hope of success. EVERYFAG and LISA are in the corner, LISA trying to explain to EVERYFAG what is happening. Meeting ends in disarray.

2nd Scene: stage is divided so that we see the inside of the room where the meeting was on the one side; and outside nearby on the other side. The two scenes proceed simultaneously, alternating dialogue.

MR. GARTZ and FEMININA go to bed, both of them upset. Each speaks an "aside," explaining how they are feeling. FEMININA knows she is betrayed, and worries about who will care for the baby when it is born; GARTZ is torn between enjoying the roles he plays with her and the commune, but is also attracted to EVERYFAG. After each is finished, they speak a few hippy-dippy lines to each other about how everything is groovy.

EVERYFAG stands alone in the moonlight, delivers a soliloquy on the unreliability of fuzzy men; he is confused about why they are attractive to him, and resolves to relate to his faggot peers instead. He is resentful and vulnerable, though, and his resolve doesn't alter that. As he finishes, he walks off into the night.

The Scene ends with a totally dark stage, as GARTZ's candle goes out; a beautiful madrigal is sung by them and the others.

3rd Scene: same evening at the SWALE house, later. CAMAS, LISA, and MAJORA have tea and share their depression over the impossibility of living here, what with the GARTZS and their sexism, and the HERR RED TAGS and their oppression. MINORA, however, is more helpful and begins conjuring up a plan. CAMAS and MINORA cross words about magic--does it exist, how does it work? CAMAS is left in doubt but more trusting, as LISA, GARBANZO, and the ARCANAS head off to concoct their plan of action.

4th Scene: The SWALE's bedroom, Sunday morning. CAMAS and PARSNIP are in bed, talking. They are happy and calm, and talk in wonder about the process of tension and reconciliation. Late last night they were both upset and didn't sleep well, both upset with the possibility of a shootout, and not believing that anyone had a plan of action which would work. Confronting each other with their doubts, they had found strength in their trust for each other, and lovemaking had celebrated that renewed trust. (All this is explained to the audience through their review of the last few hours' communication.) Now they try to concoct a plan of their own. They remember a faggot friend who works in the provincial capital in the press division. Also, it seems that WAFFLE's wife works in the provincial land-use office. Maybe we could call them, and see what they could do. Both are buoyed, even by this slender hope.

ACT III

1st Scene: Monday morning, at a major pass through the mountains nearby, where the highway weaves its way through. Various stalled junky cars are blocking the interstate highway; GARBANZO, LISA and WAFFLE are passing out leaflets explaining the confusion, asking the tourists to help. The ARCANAS and FEMININA are off in the woods nearby discussing the matter with some enormous fir trees. The trees agree to participate (a la the Ents in the Ring Trilogy) by swooping wildly and creating fearful winds and falling branches at the critical moment.

Nearby MR. GARTZ and EVERYFAG are "having it out," ostensibly over guns but strong undertones of their love difficulties. EVERYFAG is shrill and carping, GARTZ abusive. Communards nearby polish their guns.

Centerstage, CAMAS is erecting an enormously wondrous tableau--a curtain with great quantities of feathers, flowers and luminous builder's foil to stretch across the freeway. EVERYFAG leaves GARTZ and joins CAMAS.

Aria: "Mr. Red Tag Shall Not Pass, We Will Find a Way". At first alone, each group (the pamphleteers, the fir-tree group, the gunmen, and the artists) sing a stanza, all finish in unison.

As the final refrain lowers to a whisper, GENERAL JELLY floats on stage. She is Cub Scout Mother, Fannie Lou Hamer, Isis and Fairy Godmother all rolled into one. Dressed madly but strikingly, she is the spirit of the event, secretly coordinating the energies of each group, synthesizing them. She makes a short statement, calm and loving but resolute. As the battle hour approaches, LISA (now in a tree) announces that HERR RED TAG and MYGURL are arriving up the hill.

Enter HERR RED TAG and MYGURL: they stop and witness the tableau, TAG is somewhat overcome with fear. Trembling, he tells MYGURL to radio for reinforcements, but the radiowaves are filled with a dispatch from the capital: the static radio blares forth a proclamation that harassment of the people stop. GENERAL JELLY takes command, and confronts them with the angels of reason (WAFFLE), mercy (GARBANZO), art (CAMAS), love (EVERYFAG and GARTZ), and magic (MINORA). HERR RED TAG is confused, but undaunted in his determination to eradicate these vermin. The gunmen, impatient, come out of the woods, but are held back by GENERAL JELLY: she gives an impassioned prediction about the consequences of violence. HERR RED TAG is numbed, and finally broken when "his" MYGURL dramatically announces her secret love for MAJORA. All cheer and march offstage.

2nd Scene: Finale. All arrive at nearby hall for dance/celebration. MYGURL is renamed PETRONELLA. With mirth they form up in two long lines, as in the Virginia Reel, and dance a sprightly country dance, "Petronella" (after which MYGURL was renamed). It is a truly Gilbert-and-Sullivan ending, in which everyone is paired happily: MAJORA and MYGURL/PETRONELLA, MINORA and FEMININA, LISA and GARBANZO, WAFFLE and GENERAL JELLY, CAMAS and PARSNIP, and GARTZ and EVERYFAG. HERR RED TAG stands guarded by the gunmen in the corner. Much laughing and happiness as the stage closes with the end of the dance.

END





UNCLE NED SAYS, “LET’S EAT!”

UNCLE NED'S DILL BREAD

- 1 tb butter
- 1 cup cottage cheese
- 1 ts salt
- 2 tb sugar
- 2 ts dill seed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ onion diced
- 1 egg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ ts soda
- $2\frac{1}{4}$ - $2\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour
- 1 tb yeast
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup warm water

Dissolve yeast in warm water. Warm butter, cheese, sugar, salt, dill seeds, onion, and egg. Mix in with yeast. Add soda, beat in flour. Let rise one hour. Stir down good. Dump in well greased loaf pan. Let rise 45 minutes. Bake 350 degrees for 40-50 minutes.

Peter Lee



A RECIPE

Partially dissolve three tablespoons of unflavored gelatin in one quart of heated, pureed canned black berries. Add some old yogurt, some Realemon (which is creepy enough alone), what's left of a pot of hibiscus-wintergreen tea, honey and the tail end of a bottle of Roseburg rose. Beat with eggbeater, leaving lumps of concentrated gelatin. Chill. The lumps might be useful as erasers or earplugs, the rest should be composted.

Allan Troxler

SPRING FEVER SOUP

I like to fix this when I can walk out to the garden on a sunny spring day and find tender new vegetables that can be quickly blanched and cooled down to be eaten with homemade bread and tea in the warm afternoon. But if, like me, your spring feelings can't wait, find good fresh produce at the store, cook it up and eat it while you watch the last of the snow melt.

Take your time to prepare into neat little piles:

- A large potato, scrubbed and evenly diced
- A couple of carrots, sliced
- The tops off broccoli, cut in bite-sizes (about a cup)
- A big handful of chopped spinach
- Six sprigs of parsley, snipped
- A few sliced mushrooms if you wish
- A half of a cup of fresh shelled peas

Bring two cups of water to boil. Add 2 tsp. of salt, the potatoes and carrots. Cover and simmer about 10 min. (half-done, don't ever over cook anything!) Toss in the rest of the vegetables and simmer until they are barely tender.

Mix 3 tbs. of flour in a little milk and stir it into the soup. Then add 2 or 3 cups of milk to make it as thick or as thin as you like. Heat just to boiling, but do not boil. Then chill it in the refrigerator, uncovered, until it is time to eat, or serve it warm. (Check the seasoning.)

This can be easily varied by adding whatever you like or have on hand. Substitute cauliflower for broccoli, turnips for potatoes, or snip in the chive sitting on your windowsill. Try some minced sauteed onion and add either fresh dill or sweet basil for a little spiciness.

with love and spring fever,
Rick



PEACH-APPLE-NUT-PIE

-it's fiddly and a bit expensive, but a great holiday treat. Out of season, you can use your canned peaches or preserves and change the proportions to 1 part peaches to 2 parts apples.

THE PIE CRUST

- 3/4 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 3/4 cup graham flour
- 1/2 cup untreated white flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg, well beaten
- 1/2 cup butter or oil
- a dash of lemon juice
- as much cold water as you need to roll it out
- 1/4 cup milk powder or 1/3 cup instant

- mix the flours, salt and milk powder together
- make a large depression in this dry mixture and add all the remaining ingredients except the water; work them in with a knife or pastry cutter, then add enough cold water so that you can gather the dough in two balls
- chill these while you make the filling
- then roll one out to fill the pie plate, then make a lattice top

THE FILLING

- 1 cup chopped apples
- 1 cup chopped peaches
- 2 eggs well beaten
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 cup cottage cheese
- 3/4-1 cup honey
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 1/2 tablespoons graham flour
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- pinch of nutmeg and ground cloves

MODUS OPERANDI

Mix the peaches and apples together and cover with the other ingredients which have been mixed to a thick paste. Pour into the unbaked pie shell and cover with a lattice top. Bake in moderate oven (350 degrees) for 35-40 minutes.

Rick Sullivan



RADISHES ARE GREAT!!

What are the easiest things in the whole world to grow in the garden? Radishes, that's what. No matter what the weather, or the soil, or skill of the gardener, radishes grow and grow.

But what in the hell can you do with two bushels of radishes? This is what we did last year.

We ate them mashed.

We ate them sauteed.

We ate them in soup.

We ate them pickled.

Last summer we grew black chinese radishes enmasse. I decided that I wanted to grow something different for a change. Kind of daring I must say. So I bought enough radish seed for a fifty foot row. Can you guess how many radishes are in a fifty foot row? Anyway, we had quite a few radishes to deal with by fall. Here are a few ways that not only worked, but tasted real good.

MASHED RADISH, BUTTER, AND CREAM

Soak radishes over night in salt water to mellow out the sharpness. Drain. Then steam until soft enough to put a fork through. Mash with butter, a little cream works in nicely too. Don't forget salt and pepper. Serve with a cheddar cheese and onion sauce. Good eats.

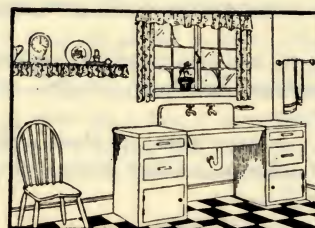
SAUTEED ONION, GREEN PEPPER, AND RADISH

You don't have to soak the radishes this time. The sauteeing gets the bitterness out for you.

Slice the onion, radish, and green pepper very thin. In fact as thin as you can get them. Add pepper and salt. Sauté for six to ten minutes. Make a white sauce. And voila! A delicious and strange dish to impress your lovers and friends.

The soup and pickles were total flops.
Here's eatin at you, Sweethearts.

Don-Tevel Treelove





& MORE LETTERS

Coming home from the City, with its busy trips, closed off people, Polk Street, museums, cinemas, rock concerts, good restaurants, and the 2a.m. syndrome in the bars--it's good to be home. Home where the sea pounds against the headlands and the rain beats down on tall redwoods and stunted pygmy forest alike. To a town that looks like a stage set (and often is), often described as a big insane asylum where we all play King of Hearts. Where longhaired men snuggle up to "welfare mamas" hoping to ride out the dreary wet winter, until spring produces the inevitable "Mendocino Shuffle", and everyone changes places. Where you can still see the stars on a clear night and hear good music, amongst good people who dance with themselves.

There was a good trip going this Fall, with a warm bar to go to and meet gay brothers and friends. Always a word of welcome and a friendly face. But it got closed down by bad landlord vibes. We lost some good people because of that. People who found it necessary to move away to survive, to move to a city somewhere, to another Gay Ghetto, and another frantic trip.

Some of the women here have it together, with their communes and festivals (no men allowed). And if they don't quite know where they are at--at least they are trying to find out. Unfortunately many of them find it hard to relate to gay men--they see us as "men"--not as their brothers having shared many of the same indignities in the fight against a sexist society.

Aside from a few up front gay brothers, most men are lost in their games of machoism, closet queens hiding behind their art, and "come over during the day, my old lady isn't home then." They aren't concerned about finding out where they are because they think they have arrived and to admit to anything else would be less than "manly."

But it is home, Often it is very lonely. Often you find incredibly warm and wonderful people and wherever you're at--it's O.K. It's the best thing going for many of us and we hope that somehow it will grow into something better.

I am a Piscean, 41, and am into plants, animals, I Ching, Tarot, Buddhism, Astrology, Tai Chi, grass, boogies, theater, etc.

I would like to exchange ideas and views with other Gays, hopefully leading to a closer community and a fuller lifestyle.

Robin
Box 647
Mendocino, CA 95460

the cold and damp north carolina winter months have been warmed by the knowledge that rfd exists for us all no matter where we are. in communes, in farms, and in cities stretching across the entire united states we can touch each other through rfd. from carl's orchard and brent's north pacific living. from gavin's poetry and alan's christmas. from stewart's road to malcom and olaf's forest folk.

visions are dancing in my head.
they all talked to me. i listened.
and oh i want to hear more.

i plan to travel soon, back across those states i've seen in the past. heading out west, towards that setting sun. searching out elusive loves and renewing old acquaintances. looking for those long haired vegetarians like me and touching friends like you. would like to hear from you before i leave, and see you when i arrive.

touch me,

richard ward
1112 willowbrook
greensboro, n.c. 27403



MAY 1



is the day to give flowers to a friend. It is also the deadline for Summer Issue contributions--drawings, articles, poems, photos, letters, ideas, notices. As of now--Feb. 22--it is uncertain whether #4 will be produced in the Pacific Northwest or in North Carolina. If you live near either place and want to help, send us a note and we'll let you know what's happening.

55404
Minneapolis, Minnesota
2414 Portland So.
-Hank Schusser

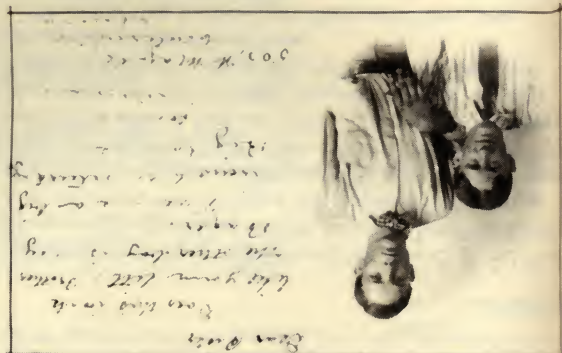
Your magazine is full of loving, sensitive human beings which made me read cover to cover without stopping. Having spent some of my most awakening years in the peace and calm of the country I feel I can very well understand most people's need to retreat to a simpler and calmer existence. I also can understand the great need to share that with others of like mind and soul. I am now living in an 81 year old house which I have bought here in Minneapolis with friends. My reason for returning to the city after so many growing peaceful years in the country are numerous and definitely valid for me. Now that I am here I can only try to share a part of that calmness which the breath of nature has given me while so close to her bosom. We try to keep country vibes in our home and my life style is relaxed and as easy going as possible. My brothers and sisters live here with me and together we try to send out as much good energy as possible. You don't have to be on top of a mountain to watch a sun set or fall in love. The country is full of good people, my wishes go out to all you country men to love one another. And if by chance you find yourself in a city, even for a day, I hope you'll come to a house such as mine -- so you won't feel so far from home after all. My love to all men everywhere.



-Coradoc
1155 Francisco
Berkeley, Calif. 94702

I'm 26, a poet/shaman/S.F. writer/fagot/gardener/cook/child/hatched out of the egg of a Haight-Ashbury street freak.
My major commitment is to helping create a communal family of gay people living and working and growing together in harmony with each other and the Earth. Our Mother in the flow of Tao, breaking down the barriers that keep us apart and building a supportive way of living/being together. Right now we're 4, 2 women and 2 men -- we'd welcome hearing from folks who might want to explore throwing in with us.
Also, we're hoping to buy land this summer -- at least 20 acres in the general area of Eugene -- Junction City -- so any of you who want gay neighbors, drop us a line when the farm next door goes up for sale.
Anybody feel like writing, do.

Brothers -- here I am supercharged with energy from reading RFD #2. I've been trying to get it together for a move to the country -- I'm so tired of the city, of the gay treadmill, recyclable people and city trips, but wondering how to make contact with other country-oriented fagots. Then -- voila -- RFD.
I've been afraid of being isolated, tucked off in the country totally cut off from other gay people, alone or nearly so in a sea of rednecks and straight hippies--so I stayed in the city, keeping chickens and a vegetable garden, trying to get material trips together, while I looked for gay people not totally tied into the cities. I was afraid of being isolated then I read RFD, which proved the final catalyst for a lot of realization, including how really isolated I am.
RFD was like being tapped on the shoulder by my brothers, who I've been looking for in all the wrong places....
Feel like I need country fagot friends, especially in the Northwest, since I'll be moving there -- would like to share letters, poems, dreams, visits, whatever there is to be shared.



Bob and Clair
Love and peace,

Lovewitch, RFD #1, Farmington, Maine 04438.
and vegetable garden. Anyone interested can write:
completion of raising their own food, hunting, fishing, who are willing to put forth the work for their own sincere guys who enjoy the peace of country living and that is available for a small consideration for two honest living in an old house appeals, we have such a place If out there somewhere are two guys to whom rural long cold nights.
and cut and store our supply of wood to keep us cozy the food as we can, freeze and can for the long winter.
We live on an old farm and raise as much of our own others as well if they "really" want it bad enough.
happiness of both material and physical can be done by seven years and what we have put together for a life of It's not easy--granted--but we have been together for or try to make it.
that the world isn't as bad a place to live as they think "heads" together and help themselves, they would find fulfill their dreams of fantasy. If they will get their on a white horse is coming to whisk these guys off to on the discouraging side. No knight in shining armor we find interesting, but noted some of the letters to be A friend recently sent us a subscription to RFD which

COUNTRY ROADS

(continued from page 26)



I live on a rural collective composed mainly of sexually free people and some are gay, myself included.

Over a year ago during a discussion pro and con coming out of our commune, and becoming involved in the urban center 25 miles away (Vernon), a member of my peer group commented, "There is no room for faggots in the new left and they are especially useless at any community organizing."

I was pissed off, I wanted to stomp on'em! Instead, I started commuting daily from farm to city organizing! I rented an old office and got use of a press. First we (another had joined me) started to establish the needs of the community by having questionnaires in our paper, doing a lot of court-watching and keeping a record of each person passing through our door (type of problem, etc.). Then we hit the local bureaucrats for funds. After a lot of fucking around we got money and more people joined us. We began advocating the rights of people, Welfare, Unemployment Ins., Workmen's Compensation, Civil Liberties, Gay Rights, Para-legal Aid and Debt-counseling, etc. With only five people we started a food Co-op which now is a million dollars a year business, established a day-care center, a youth hostel, a housing co-op and a crisis center. (gasp!)

Future projects "well on the way" but not happening yet are: a housing registry, a co-op T.V. station, an alternative school, a free medical clinic and, best of all, an alternative agriculture and energy use center. (This last one will be happening this summer!)

Our collective is open to visitors if you wanna come. Write me for a map, O.K. ? (No electricity.)

May Peace, Love and Power show the way,
Love,
Ken, B.C.

This is my first rural experience, and as follows, my first non-gay experience. During this time I have learned to let go of many fantasies. It's been a very intense period and a full, rich one. My experiences in solitude have brought about a great, new sense of energy and direction. And I've chosen to share some of that energy with children...as there are few gay men on Maui. For me, so much learning and love has come from the children and their parents with whom I relate. I see a whole new dimension of my sexuality. And my heart sings with a new voice.

I would like to extend my energies to any who come to Maui for visits, and I'm also open to sharing thoughts and feelings by letter.

Mahalo for sharing your thoughts with me.

Laikaloa--peaceful love,
John, Maui

I raise 35 acres of fruit for a living (5 acres cherimoyas, 10 acres limes, 10 acres kiwi fruit, 10 acres avocados) on a hill between Mike's Egg Ranch and the Rawhide Horse Farm. This is one of the few frost-free areas in California, and there has not been a frost on my hill for 18 years (but severe frosts each winter in the valleys on each side) because of unusual thermal conduction which causes cold air to flow downward. It is one of the very few places in the United States where the rare cherimoya fruit can be grown commercially (the Florida climate is too hot and humid).

The few gays I know in this area are very closeted, very conservative, very traditional (most still wear crew-cuts), and totally opposed to gay liberation in ANY form. However, an MCC started in Oceanside, 16 miles away, and that town also has three gay bars filled with Marines from nearby Camp Pendleton. But those kids have 0 consciousness.

Organized homosexuality (either the traditional bars or gay organizations) has been an urban thing. Rural areas everywhere in the world stick to very traditional lifestyles and religions (I was brought up a Mormon on a Utah cattle ranch.) Within a mile of me are four chicken farms, two horse ranches, the Dulan Cattle Ranch, one dairy, a large strawberry field, at least 30 fruit orchards, two vegetables farms, two grape vineyards, four cut flower fields, so I guess the area is "rural".

Yours,
Craig, California

Richard and I have spent much time traveling and visiting our gay friends across the country, both rural and city oriented. We discussed the possibility of visiting the R.F.D. subscribers and reporting back to the magazine with drawings by Richard and commentaries by myself about what is happening with our country brothers. You might say like "roving reporters" for R.F.D. Our heads, I believe, are in the right place for this sort of nomadic effort at this time.

We would like to hear from those subscribers who would like to be visited for not more than a day (unless otherwise invited). We could write in advance and ask whether a visit would be cool at a specific time.

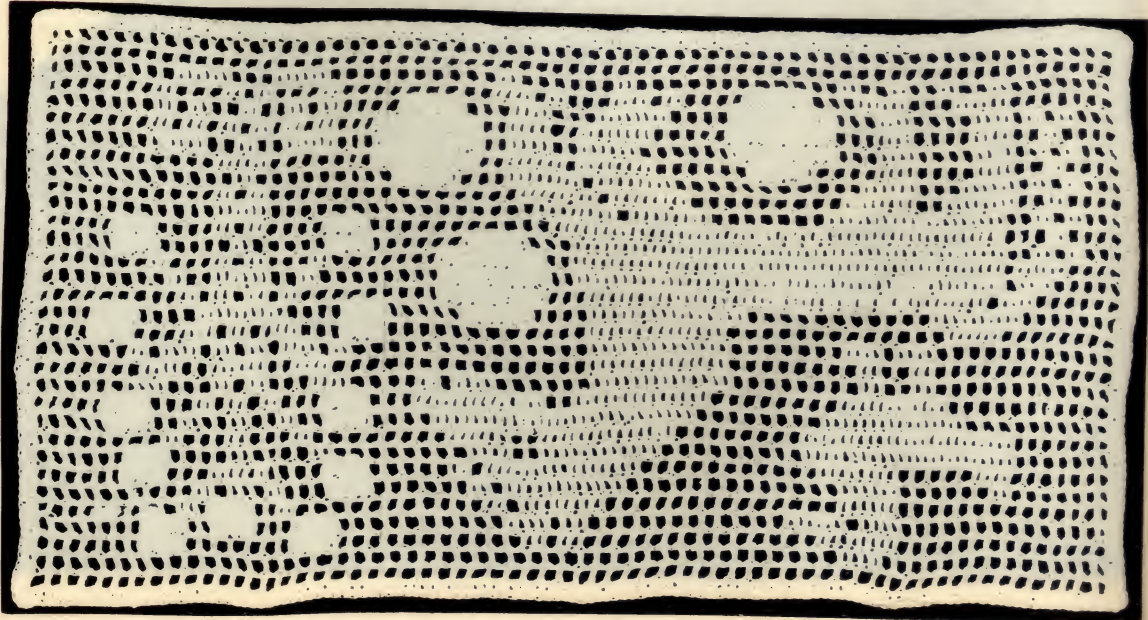
I myself have been living in an isolated spot in the coastal mountains of Oregon for the past several years. Richard joined me about a year ago and together we have shared much love and mellow vibes relating with our country brothers and sisters.

We look forward to hearing from you and getting to know you, and hope that we'd have a chance to meet soon.

Love to all
Tony and Richard
c/o RFD

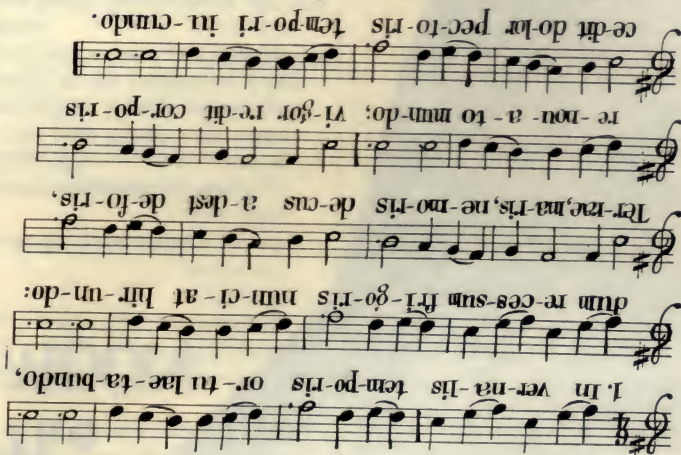
Now don't forget to write. Tony and Richard want to visit you. It'll be nice to hear how other country faggots support themselves, how they are changing their lives and those around them.





IN VERNALIS TEMPORIS IN SPRING

This Spring carol was first written down in 1582. The simple tune may be sung by one voice or by many in unison. Any stringed instruments, flute, recorder, drum, sticks, tambourine or such is a pleasant addition. The English translation is quite free. The prancing unicorn and solemn bird were crocheted by my friend Allan Berube who was inspired by 17th century Italian lacework in the Gardner Museum in Boston.



2 Terra vernat floribus et vernus virore:
aues mulceant cantibus et vocis dulcore.
Aqua tempestatibus caret, aer, impribus
ducti plenus rore.
Sol consumptis nubibus
lucet cum calore.

First Verse

Second Verse

In Spring joy springs up.
The cold retreats and the swallow plays herald:
Over land, over sea, in the woods the splendor comes on.
The world is made new. Body quickens,
Soul's sorrows die, in the gentle season.

The earth blooms, the forest breathes.
Birds delight in their singing, singing sweetly.
The waters are calm. Soft rains
sweep the sky. Clouds fade
in the warm light of the sun.



The MAGICK of The MOON

Felix Mintz

The magick of the moon on my
soul.

My spirit soars underneath its rays.
And when it is full.

It is funny that even though I am aware
when the moon is full, I forget when I go
outside for a walk to the neighborhood fag-
got bar or to a friend's house or to the movies
or to a rap group.

I could never forget the sumptuous glowing
full moon as it shines so intensely when I go
for a walk to the outhouse or to the flower gar-
den or to the dirt road or to the meadow or to
the well.

How could I forget? It is so bright we used to
jest that we could read the New York Times while
sitting on the lumber pile.

And watching it rise its crimson hue over the
mountainous horizon later and later, so aware of
its astrological place, of history, of the cosmos.

And I forget to look up in San Francisco. It
could be one among the many street lights.

The magick and glory of my moon. All his-
tory. All subconscious.

How I miss you.

I am searching through space for my CORE.
 Through the streets of San Francisco.
 Through the lushness of Lavender Hill.
 Looking. Spiritually growing.
 Unfolding my mind.
 I go to classes of psychic experience and acting and
 Tarot.
 I lay in my tent in the woods listening to the flies and
 the wind and the fern.
 I go dancing to faggot bars in smoke-filled space letting
 out all tension to hot soul music.
 I dance under the stars and the moon, twirling to the
 rhythm of the air--and under the sun in between ham-
 mering up the next piece of siding.
 I meet new faces, new minds, new interests, new fag-
 gots, new sex among the adventures of the bustling city.
 So much to do.
 I meet new flowers, new weeds, new apples, new sounds
 among my family and my mountain of Lavender.

I learn and develop and discover myself.
 In different ways.
 At different times.
 Wanting to blend the different times.
 Of my country and my city 3000 miles apart.
 To merge my two environments.
 My two selves.
 Someday we'll be together.



Hyacinth.

I was so excited when a friend gave me a
 soon-to-bloom hyacinth.

I would not have to wait until Spring.

As it bloomed and died within days inside a tiny pot
 on my plant table, I thought of what a city trip my head
 is in. Instant gratification.

I would not have to wait until Spring.

Then I daydreamed and remembered how, in mid-Fall,
 on my land 3000 miles away, I cleared a bed of dirt and
 turned and worked the soil and carefully planted ten
 hyacinth bulbs six inches deep and watered the fresh
 bed and loved each bulb and smiled on them and told
 them to take care and blossom to the sky when late
 Spring shines warm. Nature-ally. Organic change.

And there they rest--growing, learning, changing--
 as they make love with their friends--the earth, the
 snow, the moon, the air, the sun.

And I look over at my San Francisco hyacinth "ready-
 to-bloom"--now flowerless and turning brown on my
 plant table inside my room.

I would rather wait until Spring.



Felix, Lavender Hill
 c/o RFD



the leather look, they sing
 dripping tanned blood from grinning teeth
 beat me,
 maim me
 only just don't do to me
 what you've done to fair bessy
 her belly stretched across your breast
 slashes drawn together by the chains of her one year
 and the buttons down your front,
 like so many bullets

the leather is claimed as man's passion
 animal fashion,
 the look the same as your mother's mink attire
 the fox,
 the rabbit,
 the tiger and more
 their eyes,
 replaced with glass,
 dripping limp upon her pushed-up udders

the mink, the fox, the tiger,
 they would bite her if they could,
 but they can't
 the rabbit, the cow
 they too hang limp, unable to run as they would

and your mother stands proud
 her dying carcass held high
 the epitome of ladihood, and all that it's killed
 and the man, he stands taller
 as, of course, a man should
 with his brute strength stretched out
 in the suffering of another
 the cheapness,
 the pity
 unseen in his dumb eyes
 with his victims,
 their laughter, their comfort that dies

--gavin dillard

SPRING, SPIRIT, AND FAGGOTRY

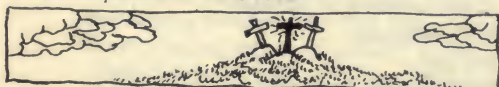


Spring and spirit.
Spirit and spring.
A time of growth,
A being who grows anew.

I have grown in the Spirit. It has been painful.
The joy has been almost too much to bear at times. But,
I am growing.

Don-Tevel Treelove

the nineteen year old Jesus Freak



March 22, 1970

Today is a Sunday. It's the night of a super day!
The sky was clear and the wind a chilly-warm. It was
a day to remember, the Day of Jesus in Jerusalem.
Today was Palm Sunday.

March 25, 1970

I feel kind of depressed because of myself. I'm
not even as good as I thought I was. It's a good thing
I found out though, even though it hurts so bad. Jesus
made me realize the truth.

April 15, 1970

It's been rain beautiful out all of last week. It's
still raining tonight. It brings back so many memories.
Some sad, some Jesus beautiful.

May 16, 1970

I was super depressed Monday. I was ready to let Jesus go, and be miserable in politics. Don't ask for the logic, I'm still confused myself. I felt empty, hollow. My mind was only dust from an Egyptian tomb, my heart was cold and heavy. I had actually forgotten what Jesus had done for me, in politics, sex, mind matters, love, peace, and Jesus' acceptance!!! I prayed.

Some times it's hard for me to understand why Jesus still loves me. I sure love him more than I've loved anyother person in my life.

May 30, 1970

Today has been hot, humid, and cloudy. Just like everyother day this week. But, God has been workin alot, PRAISE GOD!! O, how I love Jesus! O, how I love Jesus! O, how I love Jesus! Because he first loved me!.... I've been reading Matt. It's such a cool book. And Jesus is such a cool head! I can trust him no matter and that's really heavy.



an awakening at twenty

April 2, 1971

I look at myself. What do I see? A man beyond the beyond. I feel almost lost. If it wasn't for Jesus I'd of given up. Why is it that I can not live the life God has given me to live? I want God's life style so much. I long for nothing else.

April 20, 1971

Life, here then gone.

My life seems to be flying in time. Days mean nothing, all is a haze of melting. I swirl around on book pages and look up into caves. I wish a stillness of noise would relieve my quiet vacuum.

April 22, 1971

I think I am dead. I've been waiting for my funeral and condemnation. I've finally admitted I'm homosexual. Where do I go from here? I guess I'm lost.

May 1, 1971

Today is Today.

The light, contrary to popular opinon is not dying. Unless of course, the stars are dying from a chicken pox epidemic. The grass is green above the old brown bodies. My hair is short again. I will sing new songs and not be hoarse. I celebrate life and ignore it's proper spelling. REJOICE!

My mind can relax.

The sun is shining and I am absorbed into brilliance. How could I expect release from a darkness in so short of spring?

Have I found partial nirvana? Is the West here or gone? It doesn't really matter. I am absorbed into the sun..... Feel the wind. Look and be alive.... I will praise god; the god of nature, the god of rock, the god of humanity. My mind will find the many explanations.

I can feel. I will not listen to those who say I can not feel. If they are dead let them rot in their own houses. I will not follow. I am alive, I must feel. I am not ashamed to be organic. I am biological and I can be what I am. REJOICE!



at twenty one a new life emerges

March 25, 1972

It's a strange life we all live. It's even stranger to live a gay life. At least it's a good life and I live happier than most. Anyway on the surface I feel people are on downers most of the time. O well, people are to be what they are allowed to be.

I do love myself. That's enough.

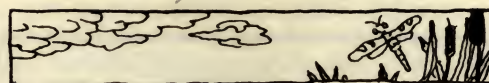
April 1, 1972

God is more than any book or creed, god is mother earth and father sky. God is the god of life, straight or gay. God let me love the only way I know how!

May 5, 1972

Last night I dreamt that I had a garden and was happy. Alot of friends; green, furry, winged, and human, lived with me. The house was a three room earthen mound. It was part of a cluster of about six other structures. I had a silver and grey horse. Magic lived in the woods. There were talking birds and animals, also elves, fairies, trolls, and a wizard. It was a far out life. I wish it would come true.

I guess I've read the hobbits too many times.



twenty two, a spring of poetry

March 27, 1973

A Chant (repeat as long as necessary)

to live in a clean world,
me,
Tevel,
son of Summer
a mouse person
cousin to the dragon fly
and dandelion.

to live in a clean world,
me,
Tevel,
.....

April 9, 1973

looking gay
queer
homosexual
"different"
an honest to goodness
pervert.

Gee guys, I thought I was
just good ole' Tevel.

April 15, 1973

hurt.
feel the pain.
reach into my warm
green guts,
squeeze my pain.
feel the slym, the pain.

feel the hurt.
baby, you put it there.

May 1, 1973

fly away
fly away
live like sky fish
in a blue and burgundy
world.

May 24, 1973

Repeat 100 times;

to buy a farm
to buy a farm
to buy a farm
....
then do it.



twenty three, we buy land

April 1, 1974

I'm sitting in my kitchen drinking lemon grass tea,
glad that I'm alive and me. As for this afternoon, we
are going to the lawyer's to finalize the land deal. At
last Rick and I have a home.

April 25, 1974

The Mid-West Gay Pride Conference was very
fine. We met alot of super people. There were 18
people (gay men) who are into a gay or mixed rural
collective life style at the conference. I thought that
was pretty far out. We talked about starting a news
letter for country gays.

May 16, 1974

When I was in the garden yesterday all by myself,
I had the best feelings I've ever had. I was finally work-
ing from the basics. My own basics. Plant. Grow.
Harvest. Eat. Nothing is better.

The Sun. Co causes me to smile and feel good
even though my body still complained, my body knows
that we will make it. Tevel is a country boy.

I burned the pine branches as the offering to the
Earth Spirit. Co in hir strange kindness, tender and
terrible. Never malicious. The fruit trees will grow.

Spring 1975

Flowing, Flowing, Flowing with the
Music of the spirit.

I have finally opened up. It amazes me. I have
finally found faggots who I trust with my personal magic,
my power. How long has it been? Over 25 years ago,
I'm sure. Long before the birth of this body, anyway.

Feeling the trust, knowing I wasn't throwing my
pearls before swine, but before lovers who would handle
them gently. And in return share my power and their
power. No stealing. No deception.

Nine of us sitting, equals. Feeding each other,
comforting each other, rejoicing in the magic of
faggotry.

Country spirit.

Country faggot.

Feeling the plants give energy to the conversation.
The turtle listening, wondering what would happen.

Faggot Magic.

Faggot Spirit.

Faggot Power.

In direct contact with the
Energy of the Earth.

the Holy Sound

the personal voice

the holy vibrations filling spaces never
filled before.

Burned because of our power.

burn faggot, burn.

Burned because of our spirit.

burn faggot, burn.

Witches, Faggots

Faggots, Witches

burning, burning....

destroy our power

hide in the pages of a bible

fear, hate

hide in the pages of law books

Just for awhile.

Our power, our spirit,
We will renew the Earth,
Witches and Faggots.

Nine of us. Together.

And what happened last night while burning the
sacred wood? Was it a reunion of past lovers? A meeting
of the collective consciousness? A penecostal experi-
ence? We laughed, hugged, kissed, rejoiced! We
formed a religion of Faggotry.

Queers, you have the spirit, you have power.
Look, search, and exalt yourselves in that power!





Moon in Cancer

Dear Tony,

In your last letter you talked about having your chart done and about the realizations you had about yourself. A few years ago, I had a pretty low opinion about astrology--all that crap in the newspapers. None of it ever did "come true." But when I began studying it (Deborah was one of the inspirations), I realized that "Your Future in the Stars" by Stella was totally different from what astrology is really about, or at least my perception of what astrology is about.

Like almost everyone else, I began by casting my own chart, and it was indeed a revelation. Some of the interpretations put into words vague feelings I had about myself, but ones I had not been able to articulate. (Sometimes I need a good knock in the head.) There in front of me was my own mandala to look at, to meditate on, to learn from. There were my potentialities. There were my "negative" aspects. Studying them was and still is bringing me to a greater understanding of myself.

When I was last in the City I talked with another faggot astrologer. He told me that often gayness is indicated by a square or opposition between Venus and Saturn or Venus and Uranus. When I came home, I looked at the six charts I had done for gay men. Indeed, all had one of those aspects. This is just a fluke, I thought. So I got out the charts of the straight people I had done, and none of them had any aspect between those planets. Since then I have done more charts, and that relationship still holds true for faggots. I don't know about Lesbians as I have only done two charts for gay women.

The whole gay thing got me interested in studying more. In the last year or so, I have been discovering a different side to astrology that seems not to be well

known, that is, astrology as a body of knowledge--symbolic knowledge--which tries to understand the world.

The Universe is entropic. Its natural state is disorder, chaos.

Humankind, however, has this need to bring order to chaos. We do it in

many ways through traditional religion,

through the myriad of philosophical "-isms", and

through the occult sciences (and the natural sciences, too). Both Eastern and Western systems of thought are

just trying to make some sense out of the insanity we live in.

And astrology is just one of the many ways. The Zodiac signs represent the various "types" of human beings, the houses include all our earthly affairs, and the planets are the qualities and aspects of our relating with each other. Put all together, they present the totality of human existence with all its permutations and combinations. Tarot cards and the 64 hexagrams of the I Ching, I think, are other attempts at a "world experience" shorthand.

Right now, I am comfortable with astrology's method of interpreting the world as it obviously deals with cycles. And I am tuning into cycles more and more. The last two years here have been the first time I have been both in one place long enough to watch the seasonal changes and have been aware enough to watch them. And the first time that I have been calm and centered enough to pay attention to my own monthly emotional cycle which almost always peaks when the moon is in Aries and hits bottom when it is in Libra. And I am growing closer to those cycles and rhythms.

Well, I've rambled on long enough. Say hello to the Pacific for me. I do miss it.

Love,
Stewart



Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter--an issue of RFD for each season of the year. Please subscribe. Then at least you get to see what nice brown envelopes we have. A year's subscription is only \$2.00. A single copy is 50¢. We have a few of RFD #2 (Winter) left. Sorry, all the RFD #1 (Autumn) are gone.

name: _____ start my sub. with issue _____

address: _____
rural route, p.o. box, or street city state zip

RESOURCES

ANNOUNCING: A Mid-West Journal of Spontaneous

Overflow of Fairy Feelings Recalled in Tranquility, tentatively titled Smithereens; Cut off that Brain; The Square Deific; Prairie Poodles; etc. We would like to develop a cultural/political outlet for gay folks living in the Midwest who still feel revolution is primarily social and essential; that love is sublime and primarily personal; that aesthetics are real, inspirational and radical--that the good gay film has yet to be made; that consciousness is a higher human virtue; that one way or the other it all comes down to or takes off from "Mu!" or "Moo!"; that things are never symmetrical; that shapes of thoughts are as important as the shapes of land; that beauty is godliness but often beside the point; that godliness is still here for the making; that Marx and Buddha are kissing cousins. So then, if you would please like to help in this venture, send plays, poems, fiction, graphics to 1000 Ohio, Lawrence, Kansas 66044 c/o Wheat Dreams. Subscriptions are \$2.00 for 5 issues. The first number will be out late February. If you'd just like to have one issue, to check it out, that's fine too. Hope all is well hither and yon. T'UNG JEN.



HOMOSEXUALITY IN LITERATURE

The first gay book catalog ever published. Over 1500 items of fiction, biography, non-fiction. Send \$2 deductible from first order to Elysian Fields, Booksellers, 81-13RF Broadway, Elmhurst, NY 11373



Lavender Country

An Album of Gay Music

By mail: \$4.50 postpaid. Wash. state residents add 5.3% sales tax.
Gay Community Services, Dept. G P.O. Box 22228
East Union Station, Seattle, Wash. 98122

Gemini, 38. 6½ acre farm in southwestern Pennsylvania, commutes 50 miles each way to work in Pittsburgh. Looking for someone 28-35 who can work alone and take over day-to-day management. Room/board/pocket money in exchange for your home repair/farm skills. Also willing to share everything equally with the right person. Must have your own means of transportation, preferably pick-up. Shop room available for crafts/business. Been here 1½ years, experienced the initial breaking-in and growing season. Have chickens, geese, large garden and cornfield, remainder in pasture. Interested in draft horses, wood heat and a simpler, 19th century type of existence. If you have skills and are interested, let me hear from you.



George Sloss
RD #1, Box 75
West Alexander, PA 15376

We are a group of 3-5 gay men planning on moving to the country by summer of '75, and are looking for other gay brothers to join us in living on the land. We will either be moving to California's Gold Rush/Mother Lode country of the western Sierras or maybe to Mendocino County. The site will be about 1-2 hours from some medium-sized city. We want brothers that want to live off the land, raise their own food, some chickens and a milk cow. As an added source of income we hope to have a peoples' ranch or place for gay city men to come for the weekend and camp out and relax. Like to contact gay men in California now or men planning on moving to California in the near future. We seek dedicated people, ready to make a commitment for the future. Please write. Love and peace to all RFD readers and rural gay men and gay women.

Steve Ginsberg
509 Vermont St.
San Francisco, CA 94107



Rod B. says that where he lives (30 miles from Salem, Oregon) is an ideal spot for anyone retiring who likes a fertile garden and the grandeur of mountains and forest. Good properties are available from \$7500. Rod offers hospitality because he would enjoy having a compatible guy (guys) living nearby for neighbors. If interested, please write Rod B., c/o RFD.

FAIRY TRICYCLES

OR LADIES, GIRLS AND BOYS.
AY MFG. CO., Elyria, O.

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS

A weekly forum of news, features, and opinion for gay women and men. Sent in sealed, no-peek envelope. In USA: 10 wks for \$2.50, 25 wks for \$5.00, and 52 wks for \$10.00. Check to "GCN" to GCN Subscriptions, Dept E-35, 22 Bromfield, Street, Boston, MA 02108.



PLAY TOGETHER
MIDWEST GAY PRIDE CONFERENCE
APRIL 11-12-13 ~ IOWA CITY

Last year the emphasis was on our commonality and pride in being Gay. This year we will also take a look at the variety of lifestyles in the Gay Community. By attempting to share and understand these differences, we hope to come to a better understanding of what we are all about.

Activities and events include guest speakers Author Rita Mae Brown and Tommi of the Radical Queens, two films--"A Very Natural Thing" and "Women in Revolt", community meals, a dance, and many workshops some of which are:

Communications, Media, Fundraising, Counseling, Collectives, Small Towns, S & M, Prisons and Institutions, Mental Hospitals, Coming Out, Growing Old, Gay Civil Rights, Love Relationships, Feminine Identification, Health Care, Marxism, Gay Christianity, Transsexuality, Film, Pedophilia, Childcare, Country Spirituality, Out in the Country, Country-City, Lesbians in the Country, Dance and Sexuality, Non-Separatist Lesbian Feminism, Bisexuality, Gay Creativity, Relating of Gay Males to Straight Women, Black and Gay, Lesbian Civil Rights, Lesbian Skills, Radical Feminist Biology, Lesbian Sex Communication, Lesbians and Religion, History of Lesbians, Lesbians in Prison, and more.

For more information, write:

Gay Liberation Front
 Student Activities Center
 University of Iowa
 Iowa City, Iowa 52240

These are some of the bookstores and gay community centers who are selling RFD.

Huntsville, Alabama
 A Good Book Store, 210 Andrew Jackson NE

Vancouver, British Columbia
 Vanguard, 1208 Granville
 Duthie's Paperback, 919 Robson

Arcata, California
 Northtown Books, 1604 G Street

Garberville, California
 Orange Cat Goes To Market, Church Street

San Francisco, California
 Paperback Traffic, on Castro 'twix 18 & 19 Streets
 Modern Times, 3800 - 17th Street

Boulder, Colorado
 Brillig Works, 1322 College Avenue

Denver, Colorado
 Together Books, 636 East 17th Avenue

Washington, D.C.
 Lambda Rising, 1724 20th Street NW

Chicago, Illinois
 Beckman House, 3519 N. Halsted Street

Iowa City, Iowa
 Epstein's, on the Clinton Street Mall

Cambridge, Massachusetts
 Redbook, 136 River Street

Lincoln, Nebraska
 Lincoln Gay Action Group, 333 N. 14th

Albuquerque, New Mexico
 Living Batch Bookstore, 2406 Central Avenue SE

New York, New York
 Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop, 15 Christopher St.

Toronto, Ontario
 Glad Day Books, 139 Seaton Street

Corvallis, Oregon
 Grass Roots, 227 SW 2nd

Eugene, Oregon
 Book and Tea, 1646 E 19th
 Son of Koobdooga, 651 E 13th

Portland, Oregon
 The Looking Glass, 421 SE Taylor
 Brian Thomas Books, 822 SW 10th
 United Front Bookstore, 2266 NE Lovejoy

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 Giovanni's Room, 232 South Street

S. Burlington, Vermont
 Vermont Bookstore, 100 Dorset Street

Bellingham, Washington
 Caravan, 207½ Holly Street E.

Seattle, Washington
 Red and Black, 4736 University Way NE
 Left Bank, 92 Pike
 Gay Community Center, 1726 - 16th Avenue

Madison, Wisconsin
 Whole Earth Learning Community, 817 E. Johnson St.

Adelaide, Australia
 Dr. Duncan Revolution Bookshop
 P.O. Box 12, NTH, Adelaide, 5006

In the summer days
when daylight seemed forever
without
morning, evening, night
and all the leaves were treasures
all the flowers children
all the wind-swept sky
was made for pleasure
in the summer mid-sun
out of sight
and soon forgotten
in the dreams
made on a summer afternoon
when we were children
and the night was magic yet;

in the gentle
sun-daze of those hours
when the out-stretched hands
of golden wheat fields
clutched our hearts
(as later diamonds might)
when the drums
of distant drummers
started tatoos of lost lands
that we would soon discover
flying out of sun
and out of sight
and soon forgotten
in the dreams
made on a summer afternoon
when we were children
and the night was magic yet;

in the cloudless
weaving patterns of the sky
on fields where crickets
played the crying games
and lameless predators
of fright stalked fearlessly
within the scattered seeds
of time held still
the flying birds rang clear
the freedom song
that we would soon remember
flying out of sun
and out of sight
and soon forgotten
as dying dreams
made on a summer afternoon
when we were children
and the night was magic yet.



--Olaf



pansy (pan'zē) n., pl. -sies (Fr. pensee, a thought fr. penser, to think) 1. a small garden plant (*Viola tricolor*) of the violet family, with flat, broad, velvety petals in many colors. 2. (Slang) an effeminate man; esp. a male homosexual.

In 1587, the famous pansy-lover Gerard wrote:

"The Hearts-ease or Pansie hath many round leaves at the first comming up; afterward they grow somewhat longer, sleightly cut around the edges, the stalks are weake and tender, whereupon grow floures in form & figure like the Violet, and for the most part of the same bignesse, of sundry colours: purple, yellow, white and blew; by reason of which colours they are very pleasing to the eye, for smel they have little or none at all.... oftentimes it hapneth that the uppermost floures are differinge from those that grow upon the middle of the plant, and those vary from the lowermost, as Nature list to dally with things of such beauty."

Our seed catalogs began arriving in January and with them came visions of pole beans and morning glories, of broccoli and tomatoes, of dahlias and cabbage, of melons and sweet corn, and of pansies blooming everywhere. PANSIES! Wouldn't it be nice if all the RFD readers had pansies growing in their yards and gardens and window boxes. So, a letter went off to the Burpee Company, a big package of "Oregon Giants, mixed colors" came back.

Now you have a pack of your very own pansies seeds. Love your plants. Care for them. After all they are the flowers of faggots. They are a lot tougher than most people realize, (Ha! Will they realize it before it's too late?).

Anyway, you should start your pansies as soon as you get them, the last of March? Use potting soil composed of 1 part each of soil, sand, leaf mold or peat moss. Press the seed lightly into the soil and keep them shaded until germination. The pansies can have full sun then, except during the hottest part of the day. Don't water-log your flowers, don't let them wilt either. They are basically lovers of moderation, as far as drink goes anyway.

Before you plant the flowers outdoors, they should be slowly exposed to cooler and cooler temperature. Leave them outside for an hour more or less the first day. Add a little more time each day until you think it is past frost in your part of the world. In Iowa, we can usually get them outside by late April or early May. Your pansies may bloom this year if everything goes favorably. A good fairy living in your neck of the woods helps alot.

When winter comes and freezes the soil an inch or so, it's time to mulch your pansies. Cover them with six inches of leaves, straw, whatever you have handy that's not full of weed seed. Don't uncover them until sever frost has gone back to the North Pole for the summer. Your pansies should be ready for an amazing show next spring.

Pansies reseed themselves readily. Wonderful! But you should thin out weak plants and undesirable colors as soon as blooms open. Otherwise your bed will deteriorate. No one likes a faded pansie, you know.

Good luck with your plants. If you love them, you know they will love you with their colors and shared life. Have a good spring, both you and your plant friends.



